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# FAST BIKES

NOVEMBER 2015 ISSUE 307

## HONDA RC213V-S

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BIKE WITH LIGHTS

**BRITISH  
BUILT  
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# FAST BIKES

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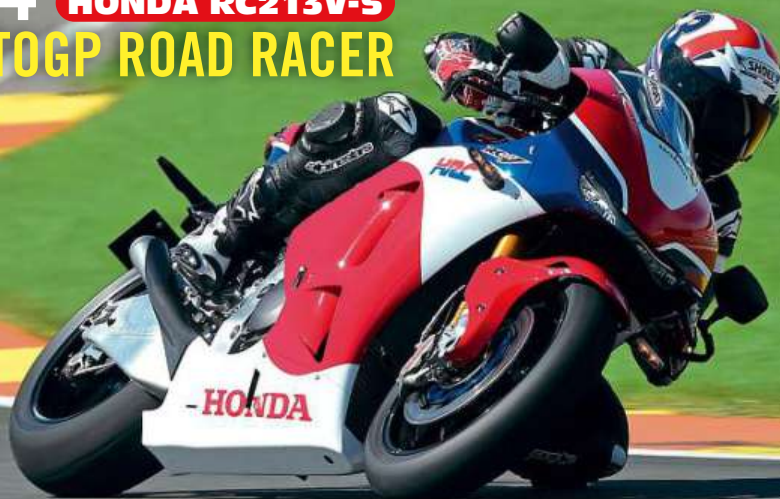


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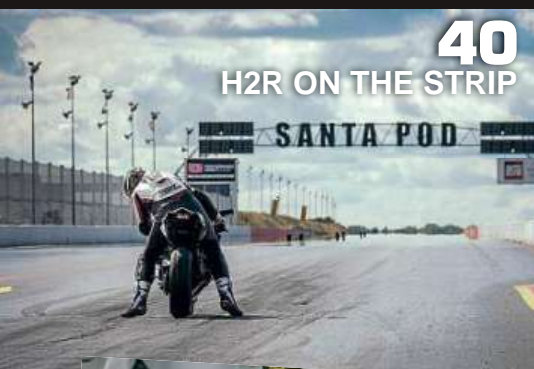




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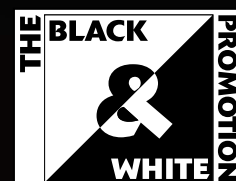
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**Kawasaki**





WELCOME

## Believe The Hype?

**F**ast Bikes didn't get an invite to Honda's RCV launch. In fact, no one in the UK bike press apart from the chip wrapper got an invite. Instead of taking magazines whose readers really wanted to know about this amazing road-legal MotoGP bike, Honda took some bloke who works for Saga and the motoring correspondent of the Daily Telegraph. So your Nan will know all about the Honda's Moto GP heritage, but we were worried that she might not be able to see past the headline power figures of 159bhp (or roughly £1000/bhp) and appreciate just how special the RCV really is beneath the beautiful carbon fibre. Plenty of internet experts have had a lot of tosh to say about the RCV based on nothing but those headline figures.

Now, here at Fast Bikes we know better than that. We were there in the glory days of WSB and the Foggy/Hizzy TT era when blokes with way more talent than we'll ever possess did unbelievable things on public roads with a lot less than 159bhp. And, the RCV actually represents phenomenal value-for-money compared to the customer RCV racer which works out about £4,000/bhp and doesn't even have a sidestand, mirrors or indicators. And, let's not even think about how much extra you have to pay just to lease a works bike to get the final extra 25bhp. Compared to all that the road bike is a, er, bargain.

Honda's £150,000 asking price for the RCV buys you a bespoke, hand built state-of-the-art racing motorcycle with the absolute best in current chassis design anywhere. And that stuff costs a lot more money than horsepower and shaves a lot more seconds off a lap time.

So let's try and see past the headline figures and love the RCV for what it is. Without an invite to the European press launch Fast Bikes had to look overseas for a rider with an invite who could do the bike justice. Thankfully we know a bloke called Zack, who writes for American magazine Motorcyclist. American Honda decided to leave the insurance salesmen at home and invite proper riders instead and so you can read what Zack thought of the RCV on page 24.

Have another great month on whatever you're riding!

Rootsy



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Honda RC213V-S.  
Worth every penny?



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# Upfront

PLANET FAST BIKES - NEW METAL, NEWS & REVIEWS

## New Kawasaki ZX-10R!

We've waited, and here it finally is in all its angry green glory...

**K**awasaki teased this bike not long ago, and teased us rotten but now she's here, the new ZX-10R. Let's get right down to business, Kawasaki look to have taken a leaf out of Aprilia's book and tweaked it with their own trademark take on 'super' sportsbikes. What you're basically looking at then, is a road legal WSB machine – hallelujah! It's not a ground-up new machine, it's a derivative of the one that's been out for four years but there is so much new and improved, it may as well come wrapped and tied with a bow.

Power is claimed to be around 207bhp with ram-air, which should equate to around 185-190bhp at the wheel which is bang in its rival's arena and maybe a bit more. The extra

boom comes from new cam profiles and a redesigned combustion chamber, shorter pistons, revised cylinder head ports and larger-diameter valves, while the airbox has a far greater volume for more bang.

Now, one of the big items is the electronic throttle valves which allows the ECU to control how much fuel and air is delivered to the engine. This works in tandem with the new S-KTRC traction-control system which could possibly mean this bike will be a twin or a triple through and exiting corners and a full blown four on the straights, just like in WSB. But, we won't know for sure until we ride it, and could just be dreaming! It also features secondary injectors for top-end push

and the gearbox and ratios are spanking new, too.

A lighter crankshaft reduces inertial push and also helps speed up handling. Aiding that are new gas-charged, balance-free Showa forks, with a likewise specced Showa rear shock. Both top and tail a revised frame and the wheels are even lighter than before. Monster Brembo M50 brakes biting on whopping 330mm discs slow the show, featuring ABS and a new intelligent anti-lock system. There's also an electronic Öhlins steering damper to boot.

It utilises a Bosch IMU (Inertial Measurement Unit) running via 6-degrees, five of which are measured, and one calculated. This works with the TC and the throttle valves, incorporating a 'cornering management system'. TC is new and has five-levels, there are three riding modes, engine braking can be altered, it has launch control and (yippee!) a quick-shifter.

Then there's the race kit! This can actuate the down-shifter and a whole host of other features via a new ECU, and could make it the track day bike of your dreams. And we haven't even mentioned the new aerodynamics yet. They say this isn't new, but it may as well be and we've barely touched on its full armoury. Prices are TBC, but who cares? We want one now!



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# NEW DUCATI MONSTER 1200 R

By the time you read this, we'll have had our first shot on the most powerful Monster Ducati has ever made. The new 1200 R version turns things up to 11 over the Monster S in a number of important areas. For a start, it uses what Ducati are calling the R version of the Testastretta 11-degree motor, meaning a 10 per cent hike in power over the established brothers in the Monster 1200 family. Ducati is claiming 160bhp, though stresses that it'll still have the manners to do the morning commute. The extra mumbo comes from a wider exhaust and higher compression ratio. We like it already!

Other factors that justify the R are more ground clearance, a 200-section rear tyre, new Öhlins suzzies (fat 48mm forks and a new shock), and separate rider and pillion pegs. Add to that three spoke forged wheels, a new tailpiece and carbon trinkets and you've got yourself a bike that weighs in at 180kg, dry.

## THE RIVALS



### MV Brutale 1090 RR

158bhp inline four, massively grunty but supplied with more standard Sachs suspension.



### BMW S 1000 R

Another 160bhp naked, packed with electronic gizmos, but lacking in the style department.



### Aprilia Tuono V41100

An utter rocketship, the Monster R will have its work cut out when faced with this.



# MV F3S TURN RC...

MV Agusta has announced that the RC (Reparto Corse) project, that first saw the light of day in F4 1000 form, is going to be adopted by the F3 range, too. That means that a very limited edition of 100 of the smaller 675 bikes will be launched, alongside 250 of the F3 800 RC bikes. Until Jules Cluzel spannered himself at Jerez, the Italian manufacturer had a real shot at the world supersport title, and while the Frenchman's injuries scuppered his assault, the fact that the MV supersport bike is competitive is worthy of celebration.

But while the F4 RC is a true WSB homologation special, with super trick suspension, brakes, electronics and a dollop more power, these new smaller RCs have none of the special extras – aside from the factory paintjob, race numbers and a squiggle from the team's riders. That's a bit of a shame, because MV could have a pair of sensational machines on its hands if it supplied these bikes with trick suspension and a soupçon more power – as we're seeing with our longterm!



## UP FRONT



## BAG IT UP

Dainese's D-Air system has notched up 1,000 deployments, and to celebrate (surely to commiserate, that's 1,000 crashes – Ed), the Italian firm has created the Misano 1000. This is a new leather jacket that is the company's first stand alone system, ergo it allows you to jump on and off any bike, without the propriety software installed on the bike.

This has required more programming, and the packaging of the six sensors and GPS gubbins to be hidden into the back protector. When activated, a uniform inflation of 5cm covers the torso, protecting the body in the process. With the system checking 800 times a second, this is high-grade technology, and can detect whether it should be deployed or not.

Speaking to Dainese big cheese Cristiano Silei, it's clear that this is just the start, "This system is designed to hug the body, but we think that we can go beyond the motorcycle here. We have a jacket for the skiing, but we are also looking at other applications, like to protect children on school buses." World domination awaits...



## D-AIR IN NUMBERS

- 1:** Fracture from a rider wearing D-Air
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# THE GRID OF NEWS

Who's qualified where in this month's news race?

## JUST NOT CRICKET

■ Thanks to BT Sport having to fork out gazillions to watch European footballers writhe in agony after being barely touched, MotoGP is now no longer free when you buy a broadband package. Those with BT now have to pay an extra fiver a month, leaving many that signed up specifically because it was free somewhat miffed. At the time of the deal, BT boss Ian Livingston said, "Many have been priced out of the market but we will change this by giving away BT Sport for free with our broadband. Sports fans are the winners today." How quickly times change...

Get yer wallet out...



## INDY OUT

■ After eight years (wow, where did the time go), Indianapolis is now no longer on the MotoGP calendar. This ends a protracted on-off debate over the future of the event, which has never really taken off in the way it was hoped. The decline of American riders hasn't helped the event, nor has seeing the stands half empty. The latter is a little unfair given the stadium's capacity to hold 400,000, but the 67,000 that turned up on race day this year still made the place look empty. When will we next see an extra GP on American soil?

Bye bye, Indy!



## FREE NATIONAL MC MUSEUM DAY

■ If you've not been to the National Motorcycle Museum, then you really need to head to Brum to visit it. And what better time to do so when it's free! The museum is opening its doors to all on the 31st of October and you won't pay a dime to get in. Not only this, but King (of the Jungle) Carl Fogarty and Jamie Whitham will be doing a stage show, there will be an indoor autojumble and non riders will be able to try a bike with training sessions offered on the day. Go to [www.thenmm.co.uk](http://www.thenmm.co.uk) for more.

Quite the pair...



## YAMAHA YZF-R1-M

■ If you either didn't believe the hype, or couldn't muster over £18k together to buy yourself an R1M this year, then you'll be glad to hear that Yamaha is opening the taps again to produce some 2016 models. The deal is the same as last year, meaning you have to apply to buy the bike before getting it – and the Yamaha Riding Experience that goes with it. The application process is available now, so head to [yre.yamaha-motor.eu](http://yre.yamaha-motor.eu) for more info.



More R1Ms? Yay!

## DUCATI DIAVEL CARBON 2016

■ We all love a Diavel here at Fast Bikes, and for 2016 Ducati is releasing a slightly tweaked machine in Carbon form. Available now, the 162bhp bike has new Zirotec ceramic coating on the exhaust manifolds, a new seat and fresh colours. Forged wheels are also new, and feature an exposed machined finish that look very handsome indeed. Nowt to make you want to chop in your old one, but all very welcome nonetheless...



Freshly fettled

## WHEELIE IMPRESSIVE

■ Perennial wheelie puller Gary Rothwell has broken the 200mph barrier on one wheel. The previous world wheelie record stood at 199.4mph, set by Dutch stunt rider Egbert Van Popta, and at Elvington's Autumn Speed Trials Van Popta upped that to a sensational 205.4mph. But that figure was usurped by Rothwell on his Jack Frost prepared 540bhp Turbo Hayabusa, scoring an incredible 209.8mph and setting a new record that only a maniac would consider challenging...



210mph on one wheel...





# compact

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## THE LITTLE BOOT FOR BIG RIDES

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# Leftfield

RIDING THE LESS SPORTING WAIFS AND STRAYS

## Harley-Davidson Street 750

The big H-D hopes to hook a new generation of the world's bikers with a new blank canvas of a bike...

**L**ike any self-respecting manufacturer of the modern age, Harley-Davidson is gunning 4 da kidz. A quick squiz on Wikipedia shows that half of the world's population is under 30, emerging markets are booming and that urbanisation is going bananas. So with that in mind, are four billion people about to rush out and buy Harley's new entry level machine, the Street 750? On the evidence presented by a day on the bike around the pork pie capital of the UK, Melton Mowbray, the answer is probably not.

But Harley isn't after four billion sales – hitting four figures in the UK would be nice, and that seems perfectly achievable given that a) this is a Harley-Davidson, like from America and everything, and b) it costs just £5,795. Harley-Davidson likes to put that price another way, namely £79 a month (after you've stuck down a £999 deposit) on its PCP scheme, and even we'd admit that given the strong residuals Harleys always achieve, that sounds like proper good value to us.

But that don't mean a thing if the Street 750 can't sing, and this is where even we start raising an eyebrow. Thanks to ditching the air-cooled 883 motor as the initial point for reconnaissance into all things Harley, the new 749cc liquid cooled v-twin is somewhat of a revelation. The old motor used to rattle in its frame more than produce genuine forward momentum, but the same can't be said of this lump. It's smooth (the balancer shaft doing sterling work here), the fuelling is half-decent and it's capable of producing respectable speeds. Add to that a gearbox that doesn't

require a rat-catcher's stamp to get it into gear, over 8,000 revs to play with and a light and easy to operate clutch, and you've got yourself a propulsion unit to be proud of.

The rest of the bike, however, doesn't quite live up to the standard that the engine has set, and it's easy to see where the American accountants have cut corners. As ever, don't expect much from the braking and suspension department. Although the suzzies are an improvement on the bone-shaking units of old (read last year), we're not talking about gas-charged forks or titanium nitriding here. They're merely units that connect the chassis to the wheels, though better equipped for taking on potholes than before. Similarly, the single front caliper, though developed with Brembo, has the bite of an anorexic – although it can be argued that in this regard it suits the package almost perfectly.

Elsewhere, the bike uses nuts, bolts and screws of almost agricultural standards, the finish of the basic swingarm and top yolk are one up from a rattle can and newspaper and the Michelin Screamer II tyres offer about as much traction as Bronco paper in an dodgy Indian restaurant's khazi.

But much of this may be deliberate. Harley-Davidson's research shows that nearly 90 per cent of owners customise their bikes, and what better incentive to buy one of the near 10,000 accessories in the catalogue than by supplying something a bit shoddy in the first place. The bike has some attractive angles, of that there's no doubt, but the arse end looks old and ready for an instant transformation



*Optional lump of wood for the stand not included...*



while some of the plastic parts will be whipped off and replaced by something far more suitable by any owner worth his salt.

Riding-wise, it's not bad. The funny-sized front wheel means you need to steer – not counter-steer – into some slow corners, and it's hardly an RSV4 RF, but a day out on it is not without its enjoyment. The riding position is very easy, the seat all-day comfortable and it feels relatively balanced. Take into account its limitations – grip, ground clearance, stability – and you'll go nowhere fast, but at least you'll be doing it with a smile on your face.

Sure, lots of short cuts have been taken – there's no clock for Gawd's sake – but Harley see this as a starting point – both in the riding and the customisation stakes. Some sensational tricked up specials have emerged with the Street 750 as its base, and the looks and diversity of them are stunning. That's nothing you could accuse the standard bike of, but all Harley is doing here is supplying the blue-print – it's up to you to do the rest.



**Highlights**

- > L/C 749cc motor
- > Six speed gearbox
- > Lightest H-D frame
- > Sportster suzzies
- > 59bhp
- > 208kg

- > **TRACK** **2**  
*Pegs will be destroyed!*
- > **FAST ROAD** **5**  
*The motor's eager...*
- > **HOOLIGAN** **1**  
*No ABS means skids!*
- > **NEW RIDER** **8**  
*Low seat, low power.*
- > **DESIRABILITY** **4**  
*If it floats your boat...*

*Nice motor, OK looks,  
passable dynamics...*

**Verdict** **5/10**

*Surprisingly enjoyable on the hoof – but there's still a lot to be desired, namely in the catalogue!*

- + CHEAP, CHEERFUL, MODERN MOTOR
- SOFT, SQUIDGY, CHEAP FINISH

## HIPSTER RIVALS

Not taking the bait? Here are some alternatives for you, er, alternative types...

### DUCATI SCRAMBLER – £6,995

The hipster hit of 2015, Ducati has hit the nail on the head by offering bang-on looks with easy dynamics – and a most un-Ducati like price.



### KAWASAKI VULCAN S – £5,945

Spock's bike of choice isn't out of this world, but the Vulcan is unoffensive enough if you're into that sort of thing. Which we're not.



### YAMAHA MT-07 – £5,199

Bar far the most brilliant bike at this price point. It may not boast the Harley's looks or heritage, but bollocks to all that because it rocks!





# Moto Photo


Mr G reveals some unexpected angles can be fruitful – so long as they're focused on an unexpected machine...

**H**ere's a bike that takes a couple of walks around before you start to feel like you've taken it all in. The sporty cruiser version of Ariel's Ace looks amazing no matter where you stand, but I ended up at the rear three-quarter as a decent way to show as much of its engineering intrigue as is possible in one view.

The list of visual amuse-bouches is a long one, and an extra helping of fascination comes from the way the design of the functioning mechanicals makes it so compelling to look around it. When you get really close, some parts reveal a little about the process by which they were made; so it's not just a lump of thing, it's a very special item crafted by actual people.

It's also an angle that works really well as a bike-to-bike tracking shot. I don't often do this. It's pretty tedious, few bikes warrant (or look good) being shot from this close with a wide-angle

lens, and showing a supersports bike perambulating in a straight line is largely pointless. With this imposing sculpture showcase, however, it all comes together. We get the trellis frame, industrial strength girder front end, front and rear shocks, single sided swingarm, 1,237cc motor and bespoke pipe, and that unique rear end. And Al's showing us all this when he just thought he was riding along at 50mph while diligently keeping to the left.

The big win here though is that we end up on the throttle-hand side of the bike and we're headed left-to-right, which we're programmed to read as the positive direction, or towards what happens next. Which, on beautiful day like this, must be that hand cracking open the throttle creating the V4's fruity blare that gradually fades into distance. Beautiful stuff. 

■ Nikon D300s, 12mm, 1/200th sec at f11, ISO 200.

WORDS AND PIC: JONNY GAWLER









## EASY AWAY...

Now that's what we call a competitive grid. The SRC Kawasaki team qualified on pole, but behind the French Kwak team sat a pair of Yamaha R1s, the Louth-based Honda team, SERT on the Suzuki and then two BMW squads. Other exotic machines were few and far between, but there was a Metiss bike, a Ducati Panigale R and the last in qualifying, an R7 that not only finished, but did so in a proud 25th position. The blistering start was too much for GMT94's David Checa, who managed to crash on the first lap...



WORDS: ROOTSY

PICS: YAMAHA, KAWASAKI, HONDA, SUZUKI

# The Bol is Back

**1999** was the last time the Bol D'Or was held at Paul Ricard. The 22 years that it had been held previously at the track close to the Mediterranean coast saw the event build somewhat of a reputation – a reputation that may be revived in years to come. Built by the pastis magnate, Paul Ricard, the track is in a fabulous location to hold a 24 hour bike race in mid-September, and so the 2015 event enjoyed wonderful weather, spectacular speeds, a worthy winner and the season's champion crowned.

## DEAD SERT CHAMPIONS

Taking the world endurance title was no easy feat for the legendary French Suzuki team, SERT. Having taken the lead earlier in the race, the team had to swap both the swingarm and the rear shock over the course of early Sunday morning. Losing only seven laps in the process, the team fought from ninth to finish the race third, enough to win them the 2015 championship – the team's 14th world title.



## TALES OF THE UNEXPECTED

Riding at over 200mph in the dark does funny things to your eyes...



## THE RHYTHM OF THE NIGHT

Night is when the race comes alive, the sights and smells alien to earlier in the day. According to Christophe Guyot, GMT94's manager, this time also comes with dangers but, "Experienced riders have no problem riding at night. There's no room for feelings; their reactions are conditioned by their markers."







## WINNING WAYS

After 684 laps, 24 hours, and a single minute, SRC Kawasaki crossed the finish line first, two laps ahead of the Yamaha GMT94 team. In the process the team scored the fastest lap and racked up their fourth Bol victory on the bounce. The team spent nine minute less in the pits than the Yamaha squad, just showing how costly David Checa's early mistake was...





## RIDE LIKE THE WIND

The big draw of the Paul Ricard track is the 1.8km long Mistral straight (named after the prevailing wind in the area). Easily the home of 200mph antics all through the night, all riders then had to do is to commit to the mega-ballsy Signes turn at the end of over a mile of pinned throttle abuse. And abuse is what the Bol at Paul Ricard is all about. Engine (and chain) failures were rife, meaning only the strongest survived. Building a motor to survive this abuse is quite a feat – as is staying sober enough to remember everything that happened for the spectators...



# ***I LIVE MY LIFE AT A 45-DEGREE ANGLE.***



**SPORTSMART<sup>2</sup>**

[www.dunlopmotorcycle.co.uk](http://www.dunlopmotorcycle.co.uk)

Dunlop tyres are dedicated to real riders. Those who never give up and most of all, who enjoy the sheer passion and excitement of riding their bikes.

The Dunlop SportSmart 2 is made for them. The Performance and confidence they'd expect on a racetrack, perfectly adapted for the road.

 **DUNLOP**  
FOREVER FORWARD



# Gearred Up

ALL THE LATEST, COOLEST & TRICKEST PERFORMANCE PRODUCTS

## Special Wheels

Many top specification bikes come with lightweight wheels these days, but despite that, there's still some kilos that can be shaved, or coolness added, in the aftermarket arena.

One modification we always make to our staff bike here at FB, so long as we can get our grubby mitts on them, is in the wheel department. Usually we are after lighter ones, be they carbon, magnesium or otherwise. This is because losing unsprung weight off your bike has wonderful affects upon it. Not only does handling and steering vastly increase in scope and effectiveness, your bike's also faster due to the weight loss. In fact in this modern era, there's a perfectly good argument that purchasing a set of wheels can have just as much impact, perhaps more, than a full exhaust system. And, all for around the same cost too – those Akrapovic titanium zorsts aren't cheap, after all!

Yet it's not just performance, sometimes aftermarket wheels can simply just look better than stock, or be in more preferred colours. True, any set of Gucci wheels aren't a light (sorry) investment, but the truth is, what you get from them in return always outweighs (sorry, again...) the outlay. So, here are some super hoops we've brought together for you to peruse and drool over, enjoy!

### KINEO

FROM – £2,068

WWW.BIKEHPS.COM

You may recognise these particular type of wheels already, as they come on MV Agusta's Dragster 800 RR. It's part of what makes that bike look so special, and considering the price difference over the stock Dragster and what you get as well as the wheels, it's a bargain! Anyway, Kineo wheels come for many naked bikes, including those sporty ones we love. They come in five powder-coated rim colours, and also different hub colours too, plus the spoke ends are also available in a range of anodized hues. They would certainly make your Monster (or similar) stand out from the crowd, and the build quality is utterly delicious.



### BST

FROM – £2,187 WWW.BIKEHPS.COM

Regular readers will know of our love for BST's carbon wheels, as we've used them quite a lot over the years. We've abused the hell out of them too, and are yet to come unstuck or have anything untoward happen, so any lingering negative preconceptions about using this material for wheels deserves to be banished forever. They're made using the latest Prepreg technology, with advanced materials utilising stringent aerospace manufacturing processes with a single moulding process. We see these wheels a lot, meaning they're very popular, so much so that BST even do a set for the weeny Honda Grom at £998!



### DYMAC CA5

FROM – £1,700

WWW.DYMAC.COM

Not letting BST have it all their own way in the carbon wheel market, Dymag presented the stunning CA5 not long ago. It is gorgeously constructed and claims up to a 30 per cent weight reduction (up to nearly 5kg in some cases) off of standard hoops, with a far lower inertia value. They're made using 3D carbon cloth with Kevlar reinforcement, and come with an option to upgrade to hybrid ceramic bearings, oooooo... Like the BSTs, Dymag's CA5 is strenuously tested to ensure they not only do their job, but are bloody strong with it. What they also offer is a different choice to BST, but not only that, some competition. This means that they'll just get better and better as both continually improve their products, and we can't wait to see what Dymag comes out with next, or where they take the gorgeous CA5 to. Want!





## BORRANI

FROM - £864.40

WWW.CENTRAL-WHEEL.CO.UK

Borrani is a new name to us here at FB, even though they've been trading since 1922, but we liked the look of their kit at first glance. The traditionally spoked wheel is making something of a comeback in recent years, with even some

production bikes going back down that route. Borrani uses a patented tubeless system, and have a cold-spun seamless alloy rim, coming in 20 and 40-spoke configurations. They do wheels for many bikes, including Ducati's Hypermotard, Monster, Multistrada and Diavel lines to name just a few. They even do them for KTM's SuperDuke range, and you can find the full application list on the Central Wheel Components website.



## GALE SPEED

FROM - £1,420

WWW.PERFORMANCEPARTS-LTD.COM

Gale Speed wheels have seen a renaissance of late, and have brought new hoops onto the market for several bikes. With a wafer-thin rim thickness of 3mm, these forged items are rather boss, and come made from forged aluminium or magnesium, in 15, 10 or two different 5-spoke form, one of which is MotoGP stylee. They come with any spacers or cush-drive necessities and an OE sized sprocket to make fitment a piece of the proverbial. They also have a colour chart you can choose from, with hues ranging from the outlandish, bright or even brown, yep, brown!



## WHEEL BAGS

£119.96

WWW.BIKEHPS.COM

Do you ever remove your wheels to take them to have tyres fitted? Do you have spare wheels for your race or track bike? Are your wheels encrusted with diamonds, emeralds and rubies? If the answer is 'yes' to any of that, perhaps some pukka wheel bags for transporting them, sir? These bags are heavy duty and ultra padded, meaning your precious round things are kept snug, warm, and away from nasty scratchy things. Hooray!



## OZ CATTIVA

FROM - £2,675.48

WWW.BIKETORQUERACING.CO.UK

Oz is a very well known brand to bikers and race enthusiasts and even used to come as standard on some bikes like Aprilia back in the day, remember? Their wheels are used in Moto 2 and 3, and also in WSB and several national championships – because they're brilliant. We've focussed on the Cattiva here, as it's a terrific magnesium wheel, which comes in various specifications including 6-spoked road and race-only use, which to us says track days! The race-only ones are interesting as additional machining makes them even lighter than the road Cattiva option, so if you're buying for a track day machine or race bike, those are the ones you're after. Of course, they have other wheels available in aluminium, but c'mon, magnesium is proper Bo!





# Geared Up

ALL THE LATEST, COOLEST & TRICKEST PERFORMANCE PRODUCTS

## MWR: RACING AIR FILTER

■ Handmade in Cloglandia, over a period of four days, MWR appears to have cracked the tricky business of getting clean air into your race bike. Used on competition bikes the world over they consistently pump out more power, and for such an easy install it's a no brainer. Using a special fire resistant foam, as well as quality stainless and aluminium parts, each is designed specifically to extract more horsepower. At the top of the MWR tree are these WSB-spec filters that increase the filter surface by, in some cases, up to 100 per cent. Because Kawasaki and MV worked so closely with MWR, the filters aren't available for the ZX-10R and F4, but for the likes of the S 1000 RR, you can jump right in. Tests have shown increases of 6.5bhp over MWR's R filters, let alone standard.

£169.99

[www.speedycom.co.uk](http://www.speedycom.co.uk)



## HUSQVARNA: PATHFINDER SHIRT

■ It's not often that we see a branded shirt. Too often it's just T-shirts and hoodies on offer, so it's nice to see something a bit different from the Swedes, or wherever they're from these days (er, the KTM factory – Ed). It's a 100 per cent cotton flannel shirt with the check design that should suit those with or without beards. Then it has, er, buttons and, er, sleeves, and everything else associated with this most traditional of garments.



£65.99 [www.husqvarnamotorcycles.com](http://www.husqvarnamotorcycles.com)



## SIDI: MAG1 BOOTS

■ Sidi's new top of the range boot is the Mag1, and doesn't she look a beauty. But, more importantly, the boot is packed full of features to keep your feet in good shape. The upper is made from a microfibre Microtech material, and to aid in its duties there's a replaceable PU shin plate and shock absorbing system around the back of the boot. The entry mechanism uses Sidi's Tecno 3-Mag system, which uses handy magnetic retaining clips (hence the boot's name). The calf area is adjustable for, ahem, girth. All in all, plenty of boot for your money.

£279.99

[www.sidiselect.co.uk](http://www.sidiselect.co.uk)

## LIGHTTECH: ZX-10R TAIL TIDY

■ Every bike on the planet can be made prettier by the simple addition of a tail tidy. Ditch the cumbersome stock unit for this LightTech part and your rear end suddenly perks up a treat. It's made from a carbon enriched polymer and comes with a reflector and LED light to illuminate the number plate. You can fit standard indicators or plump for something a bit sexier if you so wish.



£79.50

[www.reactiveparts.com](http://www.reactiveparts.com)

## WUNDERLICH: BMW TANK BAG

■ Struggling for storage space on your BMW S 1000 R or RR? That's where this smart looking Wunderlich carbon fibre tank bag comes in. Designed to sit snugly within the lines of your boisterous Beemer, the bag is unobtrusive and held in place with a set of Tenax quick release fasteners that locate on already existing mounts. There's a smooth base to ensure no scratching to the tank, and once fitted you can store it with up to 10 litres of guff. It doesn't have to come off for a fill-up, there's a charging entry point for phones and the like, and there's a net compartment on the top too. Snazzy stuff.



£119.00

[www.nippynormans.com](http://www.nippynormans.com)

## MUC-OFF: DEGREASER

■ You can't beat the right tool for the right job, and in the form of this Muc-Off biodegradable degreaser, that means just the right stuff to apply to horrible oily stains. It cuts through grime like it should be a washing up liquid, and yet it's gentle to frail surfaces, like rubber seals and fairings. Once applied, it can be easily washed off, meaning it's mint for getting a chain-lubed wheel sparkling again.



£10.00

[www.muc-off.com](http://www.muc-off.com)



## AGV: K5 HELMET



■ Not everyone can afford a lid priced the wrong side of £500, so for under half the money AGV offers the K5. Made in homage to the remarkable GSX-R1000 of 2005, probably, the lid is the starting place for AGV's range of sports hats. It's made from a glass-carbon composition, so keeps the weight down (1,390g in size MS), is offered in two shell sizes and there are four different EPS densities available to get your melon in there comfortably. It uses the Italian firm's IVS ventilation system, there's a drop down sun visor and it does up via a D-ring. Great looking, too.

£219.99

www.agv.co.uk

## SIDI: COLORADO BACKPACK

■ If you're looking for a decent rucksack then look no further than this Sidi item. It's not jazzed up like the more bike specific bags we featured last month, but then its price reflects this. It can store 22-litres of stuff in the main compartment, with a front pocket and two side pockets there for back-up. Fitment-wise, there's a chest and waist strap to keep you comfy. No word on waterproofness, so we'd take that as a sign that you may need to put stuff in bags to ensure it stays dry...



£52.99

www.sidiselect.co.uk

## ALPINESTARS: VALPARAISO 2 JACKET

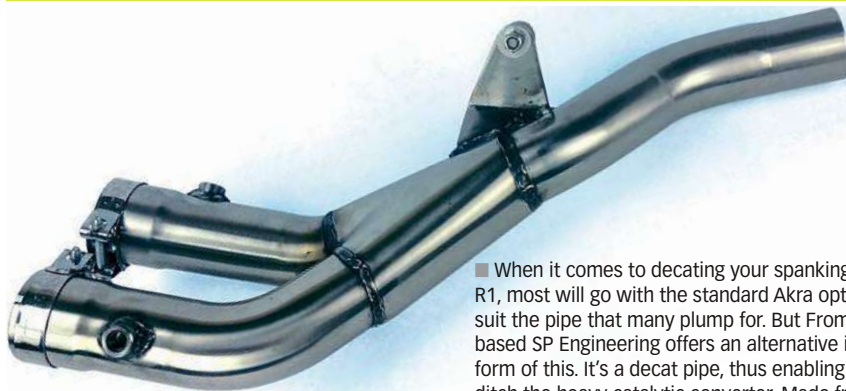


£349.99

www.alpinestars.com

■ Regrettably, winter is on its way. And if you intend to keep the faith and ride on through (which we thoroughly encourage), then you need to deck yourself in something suitable. And this Alpinestars Valparaíso jacket is exactly that, with a nod to summer riding, too. With a waterproof and breathable Drystar liner, the jacket is also blessed with abrasion and tear-resistant panels in impact areas. For hot weather, the sleeves can be zipped off and there's fresh air all over the shop via its Jet ventilation system. Bio-armour in the shoulder and elbows is CE approved. Then you get quality YKK zips, pockets galore, stretch inserts for comfort and reflective detailing so you can be safe and be seen, as they used to say...

## SP ENGINEERING: YAMAHA YZF-R1 DECAT PIPE



■ When it comes to decatting your spanking new R1, most will go with the standard Akra option to suit the pipe that many plump for. But Frome-based SP Engineering offers an alternative in the form of this. It's a decat pipe, thus enabling you to ditch the heavy catalytic converter. Made from brushed stainless steel, it's designed to then mate with any silencer of your choice – be it the stocker, the Akrapovic or SP also do a range of pipes for your delectation. No word on power gains, but to not have your gases flow through the cat should open up a world of untapped power.

£275.00

www.spengineering.co.uk

## BONAMICI: BRAKE GUARDS

■ Some see brake and clutch guards as flouncy foo-foo extras that don't do much apart from add weight, but we've seen two incidents in the last two years where the use of these guards would have saved a lot of aggravation. Obviously designed to stop a foreign body applying the brake (or, less dangerously, the clutch), they're easy to fit and look full-factory trick. CNC machined, they're designed to fit a 16mm clip-on, and are available in black with the end parts offered in a range of different hues to suit.



£39.00

www.speedycom.co.uk

## WEMOTO: RADIATOR

■ Anyone that's holed a rad is acutely aware of how much official replacements cost. If you've not got a rad guard – and it's suddenly too late to fit one – Wemoto is taking the sting out of replacing it with a range of well priced pattern parts. Made using high grade aluminium, these rads offer the same flow rates as standard, and are designed to slot straight in. Wemoto reckons that the rrp was an official 2009 Suzuki Hayabusa rad is £644, but its unit comes in at bargain-like £177.



FROM – £120.00

www.wemoto.com



# Honda RC213V-S

It's MotoGP for the masses! Or, rather,  
MotoGP for those earning masses...

WORDS: ZACK COURTS  
PHOTOS: MILAGRO & HONDA

## ALL-AMERICAN HEROES

We could have got grumpy about not being invited on the RCV launch, but the bigger thing is to tell you lot about the bike. So we rang our pal Zack, who works for Motorcyclist in the States, and being a lovely chap, he said yes. Huge thanks to Motorcyclist for letting us use their words and pictures - we owe you a big one.

And if you're one of the 41 UK RCV buyers... er, can we have a go please?

**MOTOR  
CYCLIST**



I grew up with photos of grand prix motorcycles covering my walls. Mostly 500cc two-stroke NSR Hondas, and mostly painted in Rothmans or Repsol colours. Eventually I watched Mighty Mick Doohan's dynasty come to an end, and Valentino Rossi's begin soon after. I saw Rossi dominate the field on the radical, five-cylinder RC211V, then Nicky Hayden salvage the world title against the odds, and now the genius of Marc Marquez take the globe by storm.

What never changed was my infatuation with the machines. I love that they are cutting edge, insanely powerful and ultra rare. In particular, I love that we never know just how cutting edge or powerful they are. Being competition prototypes, the companies are

under no obligation to say how the valve trains work, exactly, or how much horsepower they really produce. Not knowing these details adds to the mystique.

And so it was with a bit of apprehension that I swung a leg over Honda's new RC213V-S. Was I worthy of this €188,000 slice of MotoGP history, or the opportunity to ride it at the Circuit Ricardo Tormo in Valencia? No, of course I'm not worthy of it, but I tried not to let that – or the deep and obvious concern in the eyes of the Honda Racing Corporation engineers – get to me as the RCV-S grumbled out of pitlane.

My first experience of the Valencia circuit was on the European-spec streetbike, with lights and blinkers in place, and just under

160bhp claimed at the crank. Before hitting second gear the ultra-aggressive rider triangle was apparent. The clip-ons are at about the same height as the tall, thinly padded seat, putting lots of weight forward on the grips. Footpegs feel high, too, as you would expect from race-derived ergonomics, but at 6-foot or so there was still room for my legs. A TTX36 shock and gas-charged TTX25 fork suspend the RCV-S, and on the glassy smooth Spanish track the suspension feels stiff.

Even with 30bhp less power on tap than a current litre bike I eased into using the engine's potential, wary of the pedigree alone. Overall acceleration on the straights was not particularly impressive (the rev limiter cut in abruptly at around 12,200 rpm) compared to a



Honda's new RC213V-S is the monetary equivalent of a three bedroom semi getting its knee down...





*The home of 159 horses – or 215 with the Sports Kit inside...*

BMW S 1000 RR or Aprilia RSV4, but low-end and midrange thrust is instantaneous. After a couple of laps I fed enough power to the ground that the Bridgestone RS10 rear tyre started to squirm exiting corners, and it felt like I was hardly opening the throttle. An orange 'T' light on the dash was illuminating to tell me the Honda Selectable Torque Control (read traction control) was working, set to level five of the nine available.

With a few laps under my belt I could experiment with entering corners faster and faster, and this is where the RCV-S really shines. The transmission is one area where the S differs greatly from the MotoGP machine, utilising a standard gearbox rather than the state-of-the-art seamless system fitted to Marquez and Pedrosa's bikes – there's no auto-blip downshift either. What the RCV-S does have is a sophisticated engine braking

## TECHNICAL Honda RC213V-S



ENGINE	Type	999cc, liquid-cooled, DOHC, 16v, V4
	Bore x Stroke	81.0 x 48.5mm
	Compression	13.0:1
	Fuelling	PGM-DFS! EFI, 48mm throttle bodies
	Tested Power	159/215bhp @ 11,000/13,000rpm
	Tested Torque	102/118Nm @ 10,500rpm
CHASSIS	Frame	Aluminium twin spar
	Front Suspension	Öhlins gas charged TTX25 forks, fully adj.
	Rear Suspension	Öhlins gas charged TTX36 shock, fully adj.
	Front Brakes	Four piston Brembo calipers, 320mm discs
	Rear Brakes	Two piston Brembo caliper, 220mm disc
DIMENSIONS	Wheelbase	1,465mm
	Seat Height	830mm
	Kerb Weight	188/177kg
	Fuel Capacity	16.3 litres
PRICE	Price	€188,000 (€12,000 Sports Kit)
	From	www.rc213v-s.com

*Stick a Repsol paint job on and you're Marquez!*







*Make a cup of tea and just stare at this for the next 15 minutes...*

**ENGINE** The compact unit, as small as previous 800cc motors, is a 999cc V4 configuration. The design allows a shorter crank, while the 90-degree angle allows good balance and removes the need for a harmonic balancer. It uses a 360-degree crank phase angle which improves efficiencies through the exhaust pulsing. Crank cases are sand cast, con-rods are titanium, as are valves. The timing system is gear-based for better valve actuation at high rpm, although here Honda moves back to coil spring actuation for better durability (as opposed to pneumatic). The same is true of the conventional gearbox, that is used ahead of the seamless shift 'box of the racer – although this did feature on the RCV1000R customer race bike.

**CHASSIS** The RCV213V-S uses an aluminium frame, built with high torsional rigidity via thin reinforcing plates in specific areas – hence the low overall weight. Steering geometry is adjustable. The frame is TIG welded together by hand. Honda's focus on weight sees the use of titanium bolts – though much of that weight loss is negated by resorting to running road equipment (mirrors, lights, bigger battery, etc). The fuel tank sits under the seat for better mass centralization. Mega spec Öhlins suspension is used, the firm's TTX25 fork married to the TTX36 shock, both gas charged, both fully adjustable. Brakes are some of Brembo's finest, and are used by the customer race bike in the wet. Marchesini supply the 17-inch wheels. The fairing is made form carbon fibre. Lush stuff.



TC on a Honda sportsbike!



Shockingly good suspension

system (adjustable four ways) that cracks the throttle plates open during deceleration at high rpm, and slowly closes them as the revs drop. The result is ultra smooth deceleration, even if your downshifts are clumsy and poorly timed. It doesn't hurt that the transmission is insanely easy to use, with short throws and extremely precise feedback.

The brakes are also predictably amazing. Massive Brembo calipers squeeze 320mm discs, and because the bike is so light (190kg wet, claimed) even in street trim, it sheds speed incredibly well. When the corner does arrive, any misjudged line is easily fixed with light steering and loads of feedback from the perfectly balanced front end. The street-limited Euro-spec RCV-S didn't light my hair on fire with acceleration, but it is without a doubt the most precise and direct motorcycle I have ever ridden. There is simply no way to feel as connected to every piece of a machine than to slice through a set of corners on an RC213V-S.

## Tech Talk

And that, not coincidentally, is exactly what Honda was aiming to accomplish. In presenting the RCV-S to the media, Honda engineers and project leaders stressed that horsepower was not the goal, but rather constantly repeated that the basis of the project was to create, "the world's easiest machine to manoeuvre." In other words, the best handling bike ever – not the fastest. 🏍️

*The bike's 159bhp eats this up for breakfast...*





» In doing so there are a handful of firsts for Honda sportbikes, things that interestingly Honda did not emphasize or even discuss in the RCV-S media presentation. For example, a fob-type key and the quickshifter, both items that have appeared on countless motorcycles to date, but never a Honda. A full-colour dash, with a bar tachometer reaching across the top and adjustable for which information is displayed is also not new to the industry, but fresh to the Big H.

Most notable of the new technology is the advent of ride modes, which can be tailored individually to set the nine-level traction control, four-way adjustable engine braking, and three power modes to suit your style. Power modes are regulated via the ride-by-wire system and offer linear changes in power and torque outputs – P1 is the most aggressive with the most power, P3 the least. Honda didn't provide claimed numbers for each mode, probably because output is different between bikes shipped to Europe, Japan, Australia and the States.

Five years ago, the HSTC system controlling traction would have been revolutionary. Now lots of bikes work like this. A Bosch Inertial Measurement Unit (IMU) detects each of the machine's movements, from roll characteristics to lateral acceleration, and communicates the information to the ECU. The IMU information is combined with front and rear wheel-speed data to mitigate the torque that is allowed to the contact patch. Basic stuff these days (though there is no ABS), however Honda says that the RCV-S system is especially sensitive to vehicle roll and position detection due to technology developed for the company's clever ASIMO robot project (or is that Pedrosa dressed up?).

But really, it's all of the stuff besides the electronics that makes the RCV-S such a stunning motorcycle. Mass centralisation techniques used on the RCV MotoGP racer are translated directly to the S. Things like the fuel cell residing mostly under the seat, to carry the weight of the fuel as low as possible.

Because of that, the bottom of the tank is just above the top of the swingarm, which is why the swingarm bracing structure is triangulated

*Half a million quid's worth, right there...*



*Now we're talking!*

down rather than up. This isn't a swingarm sort of like the RC213V racer, it's the same swingarm. That design, along with the plethora of other strategies and techniques that Honda Racing Corporation has learned over the nearly 15 years of four-stroke MotoGP racing is essentially all wrapped up in the RCV-S chassis – and it feels like it.

For a mere 157 horsepower (or the 101 claimed ponies that the US-spec model is putting out) all of the technology might seem like overkill. It's riding the RC213V-S with the

optional – an option everywhere outside the States, that is – Sports Kit installed that puts it all into perspective. With around 215 horsepower (claimed) at the crank, suddenly advanced TC with wheelie control, silky smooth engine braking, and ultra high-end componentry seem borderline necessary.

The afternoon on track consisted of two sessions aboard the kitted bike, upgraded with too many options to list, but here's the juicy stuff. A new ECU changes fuel mapping to correct for more power, created by the ram-air





Time to strap yourself  
in for the ride!



ducts that replace the headlights, new spark plugs, and the circuit-only exhaust. The new ECU also includes a launch mode, and more adjustability for Engine Braking modes. The shift pattern can be changed to GP style, that's one up and five down, and hardware is provided to change rear suspension ride height. There are also more aggressive brake pads, a sprocket set, a thermostat that allows the engine to run 20 degrees cooler, and a GPS unit for data logging.

#### Sports Kit

Riding the bike in street trim it feels special, no question about it. It handles wonderfully, and feels more precise in every command than anything I've ever ridden. But it's also quiet, and relatively tame. However, the RCV-S with Sports Kit installed is a completely different experience. First of all, it sounds vicious. It's loud, raspy, and gives the impression that it will make no compromises for you the rider. This is more like it.

I was intimidated. Just like the street bike, though, it was incredibly easy to ride. The throttle response is quick, fuelling is perfect, the dry clutch is light and accurate, and the transmission is the new gold standard. In kitted trim the RCV-S is 10 kilos lighter (half of that is the race exhaust with catalyzers removed) but it felt more like double that in standard form. Part of that was probably due to the Bridgestone Battlax V02 slick rubber mounted to the kitted bike, a definite upgrade in traction from the Bridgestone RS10 street tyres.

With slicks, more aggressive brake pads, and around 215 horsepower at the ready I have to say I have never felt less adequate on a racetrack. In the press briefing the night before, lead test rider and ex-MotoGP racer Shinichi Itoh said, "Machines that win races are machines that respond to the rider's will." And that is exactly what it feels like. No matter how quickly I flicked from side to side, or how early I felt like I got on the gas, the machine was two steps ahead. Once up to speed I tried to engage the traction control, coming out of a first-gear corner and pouring on the gas heavily just after my knee lifted off the ground. The rear slick dug in and carried the front wheel out to the kerb, wheelie control blinking calmly and accelerating like a demonic carnival ride.

Simply put, it is the most composed, utterly capable motorcycle I have ever ridden. Trail-braking, corner exits, fast sweepers, frantic downshifts from 185 mph. I went as fast as I dared, and never once was there a wobble, shake, or mis-step by the bike. It seems my first impression was correct; I am not worthy. As a side note, I learned later that Itoh-san 🍷

In pre-season  
testing mode...





### Highlights

- ▽ V4 MotoGP motor
- ▽ Top spec Öhlins
- ▽ TC on a Honda!
- ▽ Optional Sports Kit
- ▽ 160/215bhp
- ▽ 188/177kg
- ▽ €188,000

→ **TRACK** **10**  
With the Sports Kit on

→ **FAST ROAD** **8**  
With the Sports Kit off

→ **HOOLIGAN** **3**  
I'm MotoGP, darling

→ **NEW RIDER** **1**  
Er, insurance?

→ **DESIRABILITY** **10**  
Rare breed

tested the RCV-S at Valencia before the press arrived, and decided to make no changes to the suspension at all. Out of the box, from the factory, HRC-rider approved. All from a bike with a 12,000 km service interval (aside from the clutch, which Honda recommends checking clutch plates every 3,000 km).

### IS IT WORTH €188,000?

So, it's the most impressive motorcycle I've ever ridden. You might be mumbling to yourself that it ought to be for the better part of £150k. And, if you live in the United States you might be appalled that the American version only has 101bhp and there is no Sports Kit available. Those are all fair feelings to have, but now that I've ridden the bike I'm starting to come around to the exorbitant price.

The truth is, I have mixed feelings about this bike being released to the public in the first place. Part of me would prefer if MotoGP bikes were only ever allowed to be ridden by

MotoGP riders; it should be earned, not purchased. But, it's not up to me. Honda has decided to crack the door open to the tune of no more than 250 units. And something tells me those owners who have the means to purchase this motorcycle will be able to dig a bit deeper to fund the Sports Kit to turn it into the real deal. But not if you're American.

I always knew that it would be valuable as a museum piece, a meticulously crafted piece of machinery from deep within HRC and a crown jewel of almost any collection. For the right person, and any Honda enthusiast, that's worth the asking price. What changed my mind was feeling the potential of the machine unleashed. Lighting the fuse on a MotoGP engine (albeit without the pneumatic valves or the seamless gearbox) and soaking in the sensation of carving through a corner on a true, 177 kilo, carbon-draped, slick-shod grand prix replica got the point across to me. There is nothing else like it. **EB**

*Indoors, on a paddock stand. This is sadly where most RCs will end up...*

## Verdict

**10/10**

*In street trim, an exquisite museum piece and a fun Sunday ride – for those with deep pockets. In kitted trim, the closest you will get to MotoGP, period.*

- + Precision, exclusivity, technology
- Price, Sports Kit, no downshifter



## DON'T FORGET YOUR SPORTS KIT...

Otherwise you'll have to play in pants and vest! Once you've bought your RC213V-S you're going to have to buy the Sports Kit, aren't you. This €12,000 bundle of fun incorporates plenty of goodies to unlock the bike's true potential – rather than keep it as a weedy 159bhp trinket.





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WORDS: ROOTSY IMAGES: GARETH HARFORD

# MOTO MK

Honda isn't the only manufacturer making a MotoGP bike that you can buy. Using MotoGP regs as a guideline, a precision engineering company based in Milton Keynes has made its very own racer for discerning customers with a few quid to spend. Well, it's made two actually...

**W**ith Red Bull's Formula 1 team based in the town, Silverstone just down the road, and all manner of high-tech race suppliers making bits hewn from unobtainium based in and around Milton Keynes, I wasn't surprised to learn of a

MotoGP-based weapon being assembled in the Buckinghamshire new town. But instead of directing me to some lavish HQ with marble floors, shining worktops and frothy coffee on tap, the BMW S 1000 XR's sat nav pointed me towards a common or garden unit

nestled between a car servicing unit and a steel fabricators just on the edge of town. Think Pagnell rather than Panigale...

After double-checking the Beemer's Garmin, I noted that above the door is a sign for Reynolds Engineering. Seeing as I was





here to see Dean Reynolds, the creator of the DR Moto machine I was here to drool over, I made a calculated guess and strode in to say hello. Turns out the sat-nav was right...

Alright, so the unit is absent of marble floors, shining worktops and Eritrean coffee, but in their place is a smiling welcome, impressive looking CNC machines and a kettle primed and ready for action. So after introductions, a cup of splosh and a choccy biscuit I started to learn what it takes to build a MotoGP bike from scratch, zilch, nothing.

This venture hasn't come from thin air, Reynolds has previous when it comes to precision parts. "We started the business initially to do repetition turning – big batches of parts. When we got into the milling side of things one particular customer was doing a lot of work for Stewart Grand Prix, what turned into Jaguar F1, and we ended up doing a few bits for them. Then that built up until we did

## PIMP MY RIDE

**Dean's relatively humble riding CV doesn't hint of the madness he's since created with the DR Moto machine.**

"I did a bit of classic racing in the late Eighties and early Nineties, then after that I got into trackdays. I bought an early R6 and went out on that a lot, but I got to the stage where it was going to end in tears on track as it was my everyday bike too. So I decided to sell it and bought a race SP-1. Never got on with it. It felt like it was going to kill me because it had so much torque. The back came round on me a few times and it felt like it was really



long. So I bought a 2000 model R1, a track bike, and I never felt comfortable on a litre bike either. I'd got used to the lean angle and corner speed you can run on a 600 – and this doesn't work on a bigger bike. I kept on running out of tyre. That's when I ended up with

the GSX-R750. It's 600 sized with a nice bit of extra power. I've had that seven or eight years now, it's a fantastic bike with a bike of suspension work, I've got a Phil Seton head, so it pumps out 143bhp. Then I built this. I admit it's not the most obvious next step...



lots more work, then we got involved with BAR Honda in Brackley, and we were suddenly doing nearly all Formula 1 work."

In Motorsports Valley this isn't an uncommon tale, nor was the move into bikes, "I really wanted to work with motorbikes," says Reynolds, "so after a phone round we got hold of Chuck Aksland from Team Roberts when they were at Banbury, and we started doing some work for them. It was much more interesting than F1, but 80 per cent of our business was with Honda there. Then Honda decided to go home, and that left us in the shit. I'd just spent £100k on a new machine, and had to let seven out of the ten working here go." Not a happy time...

Reynolds managed to keep the business afloat, and continued to work with the Kenny Roberts team making, in Reynolds' words, "All the dangly bits." This meant things like rearsets, fuel fillers, yokes and spindles. But when Kenny Roberts packed it all in another wave of uncertainty followed. Fortunately, Roberts' chief designer, Barry Ward, was kept on to look after the fabricating side of the business, which mainly revolved around swingarms and a few frames for some 125cc teams. When Roberts pulled out completely, Ward filled the void with his GPMS Technology company – with Reynolds making the metal components.

"We do about 90 per cent of machining work for Barry. He produces anything from 8 to 15 billet swingarms a year for the likes of Ten Kate and Paul Bird. So I was machining these panels up, and loving it, and I thought that I'd really fancy one on my own bike." I bet you can guess where Reynolds is taking us. "So I got talking to Barry about how much he'd charge to design me a whole chassis. He put some figures together and we talked to a few suppliers, and I thought it was a good way to channel money back into the business, an investment. I'd get something out of it too."

So with the decision made to begin the project, another big choice had to be made; the engine. "We had to choose an engine before we started, and the frame obviously only fits this motor. We chose the Yamaha R1 motor for the big bang aspect of the M1 GP bike. We bought one, got it laser scanned to produce a solid (CAD) model of the engine and airbox and exhaust. We were into several thousand pounds just to get the scanning done. Barry then got on with wrapping the frame round the engine." Dean wanted to use the Yamaha M1 as the inspiration of the style of the bike too, and you can clearly see the influence of that machine in the DR Moto bike. It's a very handsome weapon.



As you'd expect, designing a bike isn't a back of the fag paper project. "Barry does a lot of FEA testing, and the design side is really time consuming because the software has to crunch lots of numbers," says Reynolds. "It takes hours to run an analysis for a chassis, and if anything doesn't stack up then you have to tweak the design and run it again."

With regards to the chassis numbers, this was Ward's meat and drink. "Barry had made hundreds of swinging arms, so he knew all about stiffness characteristics. For the frame, once you've wrapped it round the engine you've got to make the stiffness figures work and that's a long process. Regarding the chassis, the geometry is multi-adjustable. There are insets for the yokes and headstock so you can move the effective headstock back

and forwards, and you can change the angle of it both ways. It's plus or minus 3mm everywhere. The swinging arm pivot goes up and down and is also adjustable for stiffness via inserts that can stiffen it laterally and torsionally, independent of each other."

The choice of motor, however, presented some problems. "It's quite a wide engine, and it's lopsided too. One problem was we wanted a symmetrical frame, which gave us an advantage because we didn't want any air exits in the fairing, and one side has got a good flow, so there are no overheating problems. The engine hangers come out from the main spars a long way and that gave us problems on the FEA, so we had to fit a cross tube to strengthen it. It's only quite thin, and in stainless, but it was enough to give us the



The flow to the airbox can even be altered...



The fuel tank mostly resides under the seat



Top spec electronics and dash – as standard!



## A RACER'S VIEW

Joe Burns – Currently running in British superstock, Joe (Chris's brother) was one of the first to sample the DR Moto machine



"Before even leaving Valencia's pit lane I could feel the smoothness of the motor. I wound the power on and there were no hesitations like some high powered engines I've tested, but then the first time coming onto the start/finish straight I gave it full throttle - and JESUS! I've never felt anything like it, absolutely phenomenal acceleration. I'm well used to 200bhp-plus superbikes, but the power of the DR Moto still shocked me!

"Over the three days, as I got more used to the bike, Dean (Reynolds) removed the swingarm flex adjusters to see what difference could be felt. Instantly, there was a less harsh feel through the rear, and what I felt was more edge grip and corner exit grip which worked well at Valencia, but obviously could be adjusted depending on the circuit.

"The DR Moto, by a million miles has smoothest and most positive chassis, the strongest engine, the best electronics package, and the nicest riding position of any bike I've ever swung my leg over."



Utterly jaw dropping

right figures and stiffness."

But when Barry and Dean got the gig to make Paul Bird's MotoGP chassis in just three months at the end of 2012 it comes as no surprise to learn that Dean's project was put on the back burner for a while. "A lot of midnight oil was spent on Paul Bird's bikes, but it was worth it because it was a beautiful chassis. Because of the slim engine (the Aprilia V4 motor) it could be designed without compromise, it was very neat. Once that was over, we started up again. We got the bodywork designed with another guy that used to work at Roberts, but who now works at PES Performance, an engineering design company in Sheffield. While that was being done we were busy machining all the parts."

Once all machined and made, the onerous

task of fitting it all together laid in wait. The build, however, was a breeze according to Reynolds. "When it came to building the bike, it just fitted. An idiot could put it together, really. Everything has a drawing and a model. The headnut, for example, Barry designed the nut, but then also the tool to do it up with. There were so many little things like that. Every edge is radiused, there are no burrs, it just comes out of the machine ready to go on the bike. Even the bolts, Barry did a complete bolt list for us, to the extent where the magnesium yokes have M7 bolts in. We weren't happy with the strength of M6 bolts and M8 ones are too bulky, so we had to find M7 bolts and helicoils for it. Everything has been thought of."

It's a credit to the bike that it comes

together as a whole, you don't just focus on the beautiful frame. Only when you study it closely, or see the component parts, do you start to appreciate that this was once a lump of metal – and a big bit, too. "An 80 kilo billet of aluminium is used for one part of one side of the frame. So it's 160 kilos for one frame spar. Now one of the parts weighs around three quarters of a kilo – and some more weight has to come out of it through post weld machining. An 80 kilo block of billet is around £250 a block, so you're looking at £1,000 for the chassis in raw materials for, just the spars. From the swarf we recycle you could probably buy a meal out. Anyway, they slot together easily and the weld is run down it. We have a bloke called Pete Brown welding it up, he used to do all of Barry's stuff at the



The BSB lump is good for well over 200bhp



One hell of a stunning swingarm



The best combo in the business...



## MOUTHING OFF

The bell mouths we've had rapid prototyped from the factory carbon units.

## WEIGHING IT UP

We've weighed at 160kg, with the carbon discs and a gallon of fuel in. There's now a kilo of paint on it, it's surprising how heavy paint is.

## EXHAUSTING WORK

The headers are factory Yamaha, so Akropovic I think. But we had to get a link pipe altered because the R1 was an underseat design, so we redesigned it. CoBuilt is Jeff Kane, he was in F1 before, but now works out of the same unit as Barry, so he does a lot of work for the likes of Paul Bird. It's all in titanium. The new one is from one of FTRs Moto2 bikes after I saw one and fancied it. It's properly loud, but in a nice way. I've addressed the noise situation, and we've got an exhaust that gets us down to 105Db. It doesn't look as pretty, but it does the job.

## FUEL FOR THOUGHT

The tank holds 17.5 litres, which was a discussion point. At the time the ruling in MotoGP was higher, but we didn't want to spend masses of money making it MotoGP compliant unless someone was there giving us money to take one racing. So it ended up being a simple shape, rather than filling in space everywhere. Originally we had to take the seat unit off the fuel it, but we've changed that now with a hole cut in the seat unit to fill it.

## BOUGHT IN

"The only parts we haven't designed and made are the front and rear hugger and the bars and levers from Renthal. The front hugger is from Paul Bird's MotoGP project and the rear one we got off MSS Kawasaki. They're not perfect, but it would cost me £1,500 to make a mould to get a few produced, and that was a step too far."

## INSERT HERE

I'll admit to being a bit sceptical about the swinging arm inserts, but you can tell the difference. They're only on or off, and I could feel the difference when we took them off. And I was surprised at that.

time. The swingarm is 5.2 kilos. The cross hatched finish is there so it doesn't scratch up. It's a bit of a talking point, and that's once instance where we disagreed because Barry didn't like it because it's not necessary!"

At some point, you have to get your credit card out and make a few expensive phone calls to people in Sweden and Italy. "The ancillary decisions were made early. We went with what they were using in CRT at the time, so the forks and shock were direct from Öhlins in Sweden, built by the race department. The first set were £11,500 for the forks and shock, then a bit less for the second bike because the exchange rate was better. The shock was a challenge to package it neatly. With Öhlins you get a choice of different head styles, so we chose one to suit out of their range. The Brembo calipers are billet machined, not the forged ones, also

Moto GP spec. We tried Freno Carbon brakes early. They were ceramic coated carbon discs, beautifully light, the steel discs are a kilo heavier, but they just didn't work. They juddered when they got hot so we had to send them back. Wheels are Marchesini, 16.5" on the first bike, but we'll move to 17" on the second because I've exhausted all the 16.5" BSB tyres going."

Not everything is from abroad, however, and the DR Moto aptly demonstrates the skills on offer in this country. "The radiator comes from Pace Products in Suffolk, all to Barry's design. There's nothing you can do, you can't find something to fit a unique bike. We designed the chassis, so we've got to supply radiator designs that are millimetre perfect to the fairing. So we sent Pace the models and drawings and they came up with this. The carbon was done by a company called KS

Composites. I paid over £20k for the patterns and moulds, which was cheap as it happens. They did a great job. They did the moulds and made the fairings under the same roof. To keep costs down some of the patterns were made out of MDF instead of the usual epoxy resin. Usually a mould would be made out of carbon, then you mould the mould over the pattern. But that's expensive, so we've got a carbon mould for the tank/seat unit as it has to fit so closely, then the others are fibreglass moulds off MDF patterns, there is no compromise in the quality of panel but you can't produce as many panels before the mould wears out. A set of carbon fibre bodywork for the bikes is about £3,200."

As for the engine, it's not as simple as phoning up Yamaha for a motor. "We found out that you can't buy new Yamaha engines. Rob Mac finished up his team just as the BSB



## WINGING IT

There's a wing in the headstock that can be changed to suit air flow characteristics.

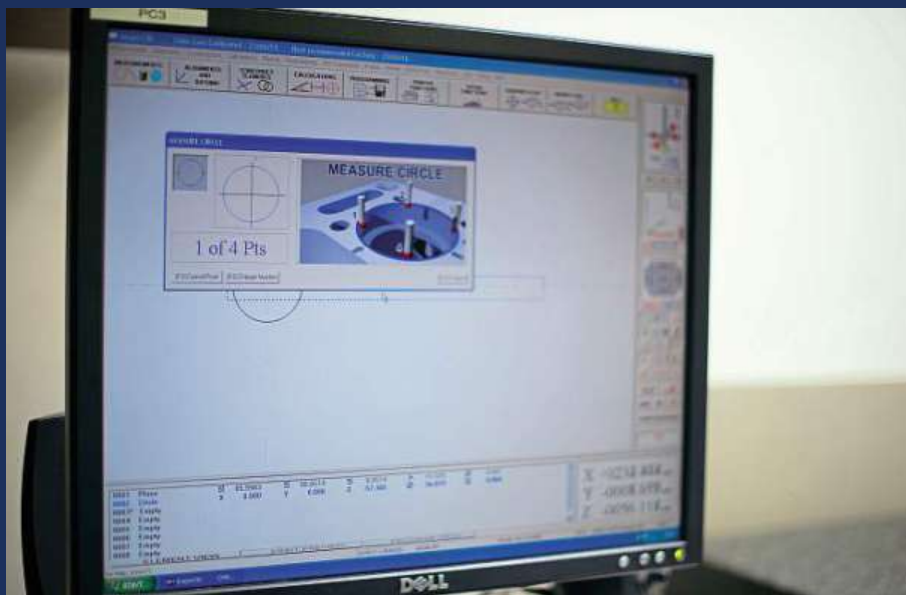


## AIRING DEBATE

We spent hours debating the shape of the air intake. You don't realise the amount of time that goes into it. When we got what we wanted from the front it didn't look right from the side. Barry and I are very like-minded, we like clean lines, we don't like anything unnecessary.

Evo rules came in. He had factory support, and we got an engine from him. It was a full FIM spec motor, so titanium rods, two ring pistons, factory cams, factory bell mouths, lots of money spent on a Cosworth lightened crank and balance shaft. Everything is special on the motor. The loom is from the same bike, so it was a BSB loom so a fully enabled Motec M800 system with TC, launch control, wheelie control, pitlane limiter, all of that."

These spec engines don't grow on trees, but Reynolds has still sourced something pretty special for his second bike that is close to being finished. "New rules came in, so the special parts stopped. So for the first customer bike we've got a fully refreshed engine from Sean Muir out of last year's BSB bike. That's got everything done to it to current Evo rules, which makes it a bit more user friendly. I'm told there was £3,500 worth of head work on



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** Barry Ward, Kenny Roberts' ex-designer, supplied all the CAD work for Reynolds to then manufacture using his weapons-grade CNC machines. The precision of the parts is a thing of wonder, no surprise it all fitted like a glove. Before being machined, you would have been looking at 160kg of aluminium that went into making the frame spars. It's a bit less now! The bits for the third bike knocked up already. The fuel tank and swingarm are both true works of art, it's a shame the tank has to be hidden, but the swingarm can be shown off to all!







*The room on board the DR Moto is impressive indeed*



*The business continues in the background...*

it. Horsepower-wise, I'm told it's got 215bhp, but that all depends on what dyno you use. Electronics-wise, everything's been designed for that bike, so it uses a Motec M130 ECU, which is expandable to the number one bike spec and beyond. It's a lot lighter too, and all the functions are controlled by the one unit. But it's in basic form, but can be upgraded depending on what the customer wants. Andrew Brook at Mototronics, who does a lot of the BSB paddock, has done the loom and we've learned a lot on the first bike to make the electronics a more elegant package."

So that's how you go about building your own MotoGP bike. Dean completed the first one, razed it round a select few European tracks, and satisfied a personal desire to see the bike finished. But the DR Moto is about more than building the one bike, it's about

**Time to fire her up. And what a noise it makes!**

offering it to a discerning group of riders who want to have that GP experience on tap. Reynolds admits that the initial hope was that someone at the end of the phone would offer him the chance to take it to the MotoGP party, but soon discovered it's not as simple as that. "After speaking to a few people in the game, like Steve Bones who was at FTR, I got an idea of the politics in MotoGP. None of the teams want to pay anything and we'd have to give away frames to people, and we didn't want to get into that. But from the start we wanted to make something that the better off man in the street could buy and be ready to go on MotoGP grid. No-one else has done that. OK you can buy a second hand MotoGP bike, but they're either really well used or impossible to run." Whereas this is a bike with a proven engine, the chassis has real pedigree, plus there are neat options like starting it on the button, something your ex-racer MotoGP bikes can't do.

The first bike proved it could be done, the second one that's nearly finished proves that the first was no fluke. It's not been sold yet, but Reynolds is confident that there's a market out there, "The bike is underpriced at £90K (plus VAT) but the philosophy is to get one out there to show what it can do. Quite a few people have told me it's too cheap. I get all the comments that 'my R1 has 200bhp or my GSX-R cost me eight grand', but these people aren't my market, the DR-Moto is in a whole different league. More like what's on the current MotoGP grid than theirs."

What might speed up sales is an appearance at the 2016 TT. Gary Johnson was at the bike's debut trackday, and Reynolds approached the Lincs lad to have

a shot on it. Johnson reckons that in its current state it's good for a 128mph lap before any tinkering prised more speed from it. That's some prospect, and another competitive outlet for the bike – other than MotoGP.

And the bikes need to be sold. "It's been a big investment. We have to sell a couple of bikes to break even and I'd like to do more than that. We didn't go into it with not selling any being an option. I've enjoyed doing it, and enjoyed riding it. It would be nice to get the money in to develop the project further. If we can get enough sponsorship to get it to the TT next year, we'll probably be struggling to keep up with demand."

But there's no mournful introspective thinking here, and as our snapper asks the bike to be moved, Reynolds catches the bike at another angle and an, "Oh, look at that," spills from his lips. When he fires it up, another schoolboy smile grows large on his face, as does the prospect of running it at Mugello in a few weeks time. "There's nothing I would change with it, it's my vision of what I wanted," when asked about the satisfaction he's gained from the project.

And this is a bike that has the potential to infect another with that enthusiasm and pride. Yes, there's a £90,000 barrier to get over first, but once you're over the not so inconsequential hurdle, you'll be all set to head to Silverstone for MotoGP next year. Not to watch, but to race... **EB**

## "WANT ONE?"

Head to [www.dr-moto.co.uk](http://www.dr-moto.co.uk) where you can find out where to deposit the £89,500 (plus vat) asking price! Otherwise check out the site for more drool-worthy info!"

# MY FIRST TIME: THE DR MOTO RIDDEN

Once you've built it, you've got to test it... Dean Reynolds talks about that magical moment.

"It was interesting in that it wasn't an anti-climax, but I was expecting us to be tinkering and setting up, but it wasn't like that. Other than the carbon brakes, that we changed, we didn't make a single adjustment. We started it and rode it.

"Nothing came loose, nothing needed adjusting, no click of preload, nothing. That's a testament to the design. It was fantastic. We were at Cartagena, which is nadgery at the best of times. The guy who did the

electronics came out with us, he built the engine at Rob Mac's, and drove the laptop for us in Spain. He told me about the gearing I needed, and we had to go up three teeth on the rear sprocket. That pushed the spindle forward and it just reared up out of every corner. So after the second session I asked Ian about the wheelies because it was just ridiculous, so Ian looked at the numbers and I was nowhere near 100 per cent throttle. I'd only opened it up to 83 per cent..."





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# 10 Seconds of Glory

Bagging an exclusive ride on the even more exclusive Kawasaki H2R isn't a straightforward procedure. Unless your name is Chris Walker or you own a deserted racetrack that isn't populated by sheep poo, noise limits are an issue when it comes to the 128dB, supercharged H2R.

WORDS: FAGAN PICS: GAWLER





**E**veryman and his dog has ridden it on a circuit. 'Amazing', 'Crazy', 'An engineering masterpiece' or any other generic superlative you can chuck at Kawasaki's exquisite handiwork. H2R's without being forced to drop the soap in a shower, we wanted to take the H2R away from its natural, comfortable habitat and trial something a little different, entering the Jersey sprint before it was promptly cancelled. Then we opted for the annual Brighton Speed Trials before the organisers laughed at us upon declaring the H2R's supposed noise levels. Short of going abroad and slinging on some trade plates for an Autobahn shindig, concrete options were scarce.

But following some internet perusals, BJ unearthed the ideal scenario for H2R spankings – Santa Pod! Britain's finest stretch of quarter-mile Tarmac hosts regular 'Run What Ya Brung' events, with no noise limitations, no machinery restrictions. Other than the Senior TT, this wasn't going to be trumped.

Very rarely do I get anxious about riding motorcycles, regardless of cost, pedigree or power. Having wobbled round on priceless GP machinery and World Superbike exotica, nothing could have prepared me for what was about to unfold. On arriving at the Pod, we were greeted by a very damp paddock and consequent quarter-mile strip, and the raucous sound of the jet-propelled drier futilely banishing the morning's rain. It wasn't a Dyson.

Needless to say, the chromed Ninja drew serious attention as soon as it was wheeled from the van. Meanwhile, I was rapidly absorbing advice and any advantageous input from a fleet of regulars who seemed to know what they were talking about, but that soon switched to starting/trying to fuck with my head. 'Ooosh, that rear tyre is way too hard' and 'is this really the first time you're going to ride it?' And my suggestion of attempting a completely undiluted run – without any electronic aids – was greeted with directions to the local mortuary. I'm not joking and neither were they.

The aim was simple. I heard (because I sure as shit didn't read it) that the weekly rag had nailed a 9.8s standing quarter-mile aboard the H2R, so I wasn't going to leave the Pod without beating that marker. Again, the locals and RWYB patrons – some of whom were wearing jacket, jeans and dainty boots to do 180mph – pitched in with some candid cynicism: not only is Santa Pod's strip tangibly uphill, we had a fierce headwind to combat and, as I was finding out, every teeny tiny variable manifests itself into great importance.

Ignorance and naivety would say this sprinting lark is just a case of opening the gas with as much vigour as possible and dropping the clutch, feeding in the gears via the slick quickshifter. Sounds easy, right? Any numbnut can go fast in a straight line, right? Drop in the little Ninja nugget that is the H2R and the whole equation deviates somewhat.

The first run was all about getting a feel for things, getting accustomed to a potential widower in the H2R, and making sure I wasn't going to die. It sounds ridiculous initially, but it was also a case of sussing the





OMG, OMG, OMG...

■ quarter-mile 'track': exploring grip levels, figuring out lines (the cars have left gargantuan ruts over the years) and, above all else, fathom how/when/if I can slow this puppy down before running out of road and taking up ploughing.

As I rolled onto the strip for the first time, it was a daunting view: like it was out of a film, or doctored in Instagram. A hazy ascending horizon cluttered with an abundance of spectators filling the grandstands either side and the stickiest, most bizarre stretch of 'Tarmac' you'd ever seen. To touch, it's like you're treading on a halloumi-based rubber, squeaky and almost spongy on the boot.

With no tyre warmers allowed, burnouts are essential for the perfect launch – particularly when there are 300-plus ponies trying to valiantly escape via one wheel and a slick tyre. Very much like the ZX-10R's KTRC electronics suite, the H2R still allows burnouts accompanied by a violent soundtrack.

Following some brief homework and a watchful eye beforehand, the lights are fairly easy to understand. The top four indicate your position on the start line, as the front wheel needs to be primed in between two strips that house the timing equipment. As soon as those four lights are illuminated on both lines, you too need to be primed. When the next strip lights up, it's go time, as no human reaction will be able to anticipate the green light.

With the KTRC set to level 1, it was a case of experimentation. And hope. Lining up next

to me was a standard-ish ZX-10R. What better way to induct the H2R into sprinting than to spank its cousin? I held the revs at 6,000rpm and gently released the clutch/mayhem.

It's not often I lack the ability to articulate riding sensations or dynamics, though on this occasion, summing up that frenzied 10 seconds and putting them into words has proven problematic. My brain has honestly never had to manage such warp-speed acceleration and blurry peripheral vision, packing numerous decisive riding inputs into what felt like four seconds.

Having buckaroo'd the start, legs flailing behind in a desperate attempt to find balance, I was soon in full tuck and sucking up the ZX-10R, rear wheel still spinning despite having the traction control engaged. When I say soon, I mean three-quarters of the way down the strip, as I was only just able to fight the forces and wind battering. Looking back, I think the revs were too low during launch, therefore engine torque levels and supercharger boost joined to offer euthanasia. Hitting fifth gear, the rear wheel span again and momentarily peppered the redline as I crossed the finish line. Fuuuuuuuuuuck, is all I could muster inside my head.

Dyno numbers usually mean bugger all. Kawasaki claims 326bhp might be a little optimistic as a rear wheel figure but after seeing the H2R chew up JHS Racing's previously pristine dyno, heeding its ferocity and sheer metallic lunacy, my botty dyno



You want it warm, not hot

acted as enough of a power barometer. It makes the H2 feel like a Christmas cracker toy. On returning to the pits, I collected our timing sheet from the office upstairs. 10.8s? Not bad. Only a second to trim and fastest bike in the first round of runs. This is easy.

Oh no it ain't. With far too much wheelspin for my liking and self-preservation, a lengthier burnout was the order for the next run, lining up next to a ratty but trick Bandit – 240bhp worth of turbo Bandit. On launching and nearly reaching the moon, I figured that it was too much of a burnout, too much rear grip as it wheeled for the entire quarter-mile stretch. Still, I shaved a tenth off and was faster in every segment.

It soon became apparent that I was losing all my time in the first 1/8 mile, as the weapon of mass destruction threatened to loop or



Parp!

Only one of these two is scared










## FEATURE

First up – launch control. Rolling up to the line faffing with switchgear buttons after a burnout, the noise reverberating around was enough to shatter bones, never mind my ears.

Instantly, the launch control felt comforting and numbed the lunacy a little, but was a good fraction slower than previous human-abled launches. The front wheel was planted to the surface and the rear didn't spin until the LC's functionality quits at 95mph, but that was due to power being curtailed too much. Breaking the finishing beam at 152mph was scant redemption with a 10.6s session.

Some of these regulars reckoned they'd enjoyed 25 to 30 uninterrupted runs in one day. But seeing as there was a Ford car show the following day – where fully-grown men jizz over each other's modified four-wheelers and enter polishing competitions – this meant the Pod was rather busy, crushing any hopes of busting a sub-10s run with only five lengths of Santa Pod covered. The last feeble attempt was fruitless as the track was now dripping in drag car juices, and I was fresh out of ideas. The fastest bike on the day ran a 9.5s quarter-mile. It was a GSX-R1000 K6 with a standard motor and lengthened swingarm, proving power isn't everything. It's all about that initial launch and 60ft times.

I cannot understand some of the criticism directed at the H2/H2R, only assuming jealously as the cause. It's all of those aforementioned generic superlatives rammed into a rolling melange of doolally. But this test? It was like having a 20-inch penis and only being able to use the first few inches... 



Some snout!



One shiny bum



Insert key for lunacy



Don't break a wing - not cheap...



It's very, very loud



Carbon, carbon, everywhere...

Serene - for now...



### TECHNICAL Kawasaki H2R



ENGINE	Type	998cc, 16v, DOHC, Supercharged four
	Bore x Stroke	76 x 55mm
	Compression	8.3:1
	Fuelling	EFI 50mm throttle-bodies
	Tested Power	243bhp@ 12,200rpm
	Tested Torque	144Nm @ 12,000rpm
ELECTRONICS	RBW/Riding Modes	Yes / Two
	Traction Control	Yes / Three levels
	ABS	Yes
	Quickshifter	Yes
	Wheelie Control	Yes
	Launch Control	Yes
CHASSIS	Frame	High tensile steel trellis
	Front Suspension	43mm KYB AOD II fork, fully adjustable
	Rear Suspension	KYB monoshock, fully adjustable
	Front Brakes	Four-piston Brembo monoblocs, 320mm discs
	Rear Brakes	Two-piston caliper, 250mm disc
DIMENSIONS	Wheelbase	830mm
	Seat Height	1,450mm
	Kerb Weight	216kg
	Fuel Capacity	17L
PRICE	Price	£41,000
	From	Kawasaki UK, 01628 856750 <a href="http://www.kawasaki.co.uk">www.kawasaki.co.uk</a>





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*This was the fastest bike of the day. A K6 Gixer Thou' with dumbbells running through the front spindle to prevent it going skywards during the launch period.*



# SANTA POD(ERS)

Like noisy, fast bikes, and pilots who love to chat about their favourite adrenaline hit? Turning up for a RWYB day at Santa Pod can deliver this and more. There are some great, varied, funny and friendly, not to mention wild, characters who inhabit the strip on regular occasions. Just as interesting are the bikes they ride, from precision fettled to garage specials, so we've chosen just a few to show off from our day...

*The Cross brothers. They weren't that cross, just fast. What looked like big capacity dragsters capable of 8s runs, turned out to be GSX-R400s wrapped in bespoke chassis doing 11s.*





## SANTA POD'ERS

*A very tidy retro Suzuki, in popular retro colours and, well, certainly retro riding gear to suit!*

*Beast of a TL1000 and the RWYB championship leader. Why a TL?  
"Because everyone's got a 'Busa," said owner Michael Gooding. Best time of 10.2s and 132mph.*



*The rat bike option. A tatty, well-used GSX-R1100 with no tank, a lengthened swinger, and looking like it might spontaneously implode at any minute. Still quick, though!*





WORDS: ROOTSY PICS: BMW MOTORRAD

# GUY'S RIDE MAN'S BIKE

Busy all day under a truck somewhere near Hull, Rootsy stepped into Guy Martin's shoes for a test of his Tyco BMW S 1000 RR

I've rounded Valencia's last turn for the third and final time on Guy Martin's Tyco BMW S 1000 RR TT bike, and despite my desire to stay out for another umpteen laps, I know I'd have my balls clamped in a vice if I did anything but trundle back down pitlane to hand the bike back to its rightful owner – in this case the Tyco team's co-ordinator and the bike's chaperone for the day, Mark McCarville.

I've done just shy of ten miles on the Beemer, but I've got a sweat on already and there's a little bit of me (namely my still mangled left hand) that doesn't mind that a fourth, fifth or sixth lap isn't on the cards because this has been an intense hit of a full blown 220bhp superbike. If I were Guy Martin at the TT I'd be driving uphill from Glen Helen and wheelieing out of Cregwilly's hill onto the Cronk-y-Voddy straight at this point. On my first lap of six... 🏍



*Last seen in a hedge somewhere near Belfast. The bike, not Rootsy...*





*Guy-ded missile...*





No BMW has ever looked as handsome as this...

» In fact, if I was Guy Martin I'd happily stay out and later appreciate my balls in a some sort of compress, because they'd be that bloody big that they'd need some sort of restraint – and that's even before his massive stack at the Ulster. Piloting a bike round Valencia at a relatively tame pace is one thing. Threading this massively powerful machine through the needle's eye that is the 37 and three quarter miles of the Isle of Man TT course is quite another.

Last year I was lucky enough to be sat in a car with Michael Dunlop for an hour where he described how unmanageable his record breaking BMW was round the Manx course. I quivered at the thought of such a perilous act, noting that me and Dunlop are simply not made of the same stuff. Through sheer bloody mindedness, both last year and this, he managed some quite remarkable feats on the BMW as the electronic-laden missile wasn't

exactly suited to life on the roughest of racing roads. And Dunlop's actions in 2014 prove that success breeds success, and that's why we've seen a raft of teams and riders move to the German brand – including Northern Ireland's Tyco team, from Suzuki.

When BMW stepped back from the world superbike championship, it diverted its race resources into a new initiative – the HP Race Support program. Now teams around the world from Ayrton Badavini's WSB squad down to a bloke on a trackday has access to a rich seam of technical resource for the RR, no matter its age. The higher profile the championship, the more support a team gets – hence the close working relationship between Tyco and the BMW race base in Berlin. I asked Berti Hauser, BMW Motorsport's Technical Director if this was cheaper than running a WSB team. He replied, "It's more effective than the WSB spending," and one

glance at the huge numbers of racers on the RR points pertinently to this effectiveness.

Being massively experienced and well resourced, Tyco has stood on its own two feet since it received its delivery of 2015-spec bikes. The motors were initially built in Berlin, but are now looked after at the team's Moneymore HQ. Impressed by a package that saw the bike in barely tickled superstock trim pump out more power than their Suzuki superbike of last year, the process of refining the bike has been quick and relatively stress free – thanks significantly to the HP Race Support system.

The heart of any bike is its motor, and in this almost-everything-goes guise that is the BMW's TT spec, the kitchen sink has been thrown at it so that it can attain its mammoth 220bhp output. Allowing virtually WSB levels of tuning, the Tyco machine has had most of its internals breathed on in one way or another. Titanium valves, flowed head, new conrods, new cams, a different sump and a balanced crankshaft all go towards building from the already startling stock spec. Thanks to the skimmed head, compression is upped impressively, to 14.8:1, and peak power is now measured at 14,300rpm, where it just straddles the 220bhp barrier.

Every heart also needs an electronic pulse to trigger it, and this is where things start to get interesting. BMW has made giant leaps in this area, able to offer its Race Calibration Kit that offers a myriad of settings to help set-up the bike. A new race ECU has been developed by BMW that offers 95 per cent of the functionality of the WSB unit, including such trinkets as corner by corner mapping. At €7,600 it's not cheap and is not allowed in BSB that runs a single Motec unit, but this just shows what options are available to the pro-teams with the right budgets.

Running traction control, unlike Tyco's BSB bike, and belching out a beautiful inline four scream through the Akrapovic titanium



By 'eck she handles a reet treat...





Factory everything, even the paddock stand!



Radial rear brake. Lush



Welcome to Guy's office



Fancy a fiddle?

system, it feels utterly mint when it's on song. Valencia's pitlane leads out onto the run down to turn two, and the instant hit of 220bhp hits you right in the solar plexus. Yup, it's a case of gassing it hard from the off to get the most out of these three laps, and while it's no Bray Hill, it's certainly enough to get my heart racing. Pick up is crisp, but not so in-your-face that you fear winding it on after the next apex, and the intervention of the electronics is light, which is testament to both the wizardry here and the fact that the rear Metzeler Racetec RR has got some life left in it after a hard few sessions. The light on the dash is flashing, but the cull in power is barely noticeable meaning that as much momentum as possible is carried forward. Occasionally this enthusiasm heads north, but everything is calmed until the front wheel returns to terra firma.

Coming out of the last turn onto the near kilometre long straight, Guy's bike simply rockets down the straight and gobbles up the next three gears before I snick it into sixth for an instant. Then it's a chance to utilise the surprisingly beneficial auto-blipper and downshifter combo to ease it through turn

one for the first time in anger. It's rock solid down the straight, in part due to the less radical dimensions of the Metzeler rubber, but also because it's set-up for Manx straights.

You'd think that all a 220bhp Beemer would want to do is wheelie its head off, but the Tyco boys have done their homework and balanced the bike much better than either standard or in short circuit guise. You don't hover over the front of the bike, which is exactly what you don't want to do at the TT, but while it doesn't turn in on a sixpence, it's hardly a slouch heading into turns either. It uses the same chassis as the BSB bike, but playing with all the offsets allows the Tyco team to tickle the bike to Guy's fancy.

The forged Brembo calipers offer immense resistance allied to the SBS pads within. It scrubs off speed nonchalantly and without any dramas from the rear wanting to come round, such is its poise under such pressure. It's not a bike made for lean, but there's more than enough to be getting on with. Once it's in a turn it feels so assured that you immediately regret not running in with another 5mph on the dash. 🏍️



Two more laps and it's time for a brew!

## TYCO BMW S 1000 RR



### GUY ON 132.398MPH

Guy Martin's second lap in the Senior saw him get into the 132mph club with, what was then, the second quickest time ever round the course. Michael Dunlop (on a BMW) and James Hillier then went and pipped his time, but Martin is still part of an exclusive group.

"We were beaten on the day by the better man, but my bike was just mint. There are places we could improve of course, but from Ramsey to the start-finish – there wasn't a better bike on the circuit. I was with Hutchy on the road and thought he was challenging for the win, which possibly cost me a good shot at third place, as I didn't want to start dicing with him and messing up his race"

If you have to ask, you can't afford it...



### NEXT MONTH

The BMW S 1000 RR jamboree continues! There are six more sexual bikes ridden, from standard to world superbike – you'll be truly amazed at how different they all are!



Valencia's inner curves are all second and third gear stuff, and thanks to the bike's stability and inherent etiquette it's making life very easy on board. Hurtling round the TT course at 132mph needs supreme concentration, and it appears that this is a bike that let's Guy achieve that. Running British built K-Tech hardware – the KTR-3 forks and 35DDS Pro shock – the ride is sublime, and over the ripples through the

penultimate turn offers a chance to really savour the set-up. Because you're gassing hard all through the turn, the focus is on the rear where the bumps are noticeable, yet you feel that everything is being calmly dealt with by the all Gucci kit on board. Combined with the electronics, that as standard would have spat the dummy by now, you just want to attack the corner harder and harder.

I have one last stab at it, trying to provoke the rear Metzeler into making me look like a hero (it doesn't) before I back off for the last turn, taking in everything that just happened. Of course, the true test of this machine is its abilities around the Island, but this precious insight reveals a bike that is so intelligently built that it is still able to execute in the plushest manner possible – even though its built for the roughest test around... **EB**

## SEAT

For Guy this Carbonin seat is perfect. It doesn't work for the smaller riders because they end up too far away from the tank.

## WHEELS

OZ Racing wheels replace the not so standard HP wheels, but by all accounts they weigh pretty much the same anyway.

## EXHAUST

Akrapovic supply a full titanium system. The sump is modified to allow for the new routing.



## TANK

To get two laps out of the tank at the TT the team expands the fuel capacity to 23.9 litres. This is done by filling the space in under the seat.

## ELECTRONICS

BMW's suite of trickery gets fitted, so that means the HP Race PowerKit and Race Calibration Kit 3 is all utilised and enables the bikes to run traction control as well as the ability to change power modes. "The BSB bike runs the Motec system," says McCarville, "but we can do so much more with this system. The aids on the bike still matter at both the TT and the North West, if only to improve tyre life. Guy actually uses very little electronic intervention."

## SUSPENSION

Eschewing Öhlins, the Tyco team runs with K-Tech suspension, not least for their expertise at the Isle of Man. A set of KTR-3 DDS closed cartridge forks if fitted to the front, a DDS Pro shock to the rear – getting on for £10,000 worth of suspension at full rrp.

## CHASSIS

The Tyco bike runs the base chassis package of the BSB bike, with slight refinements for the environment it's in. "This runs slightly longer than the BSB bike," says McCarville, "and the bike runs more balanced than the BSB bike through changes in pivot position and the suspension linkage. The headstock angle is different too. Once we set it up, that's kind of it, whereas we'll change the BSB bike per circuit. That means the guys know what they're riding, which helps because they don't ride them as much. It doesn't turn as quick as the BSB bike, but then it doesn't need to – it's designed to absorb the bumps better."

## MOTOR

Originally built at BMW's Race HQ in Berlin, it's good for over 220bhp, but tuned to suit the TT environment more than, say, a WSB motor from the same stable. A balanced crank moves to more intensive work higher up, with new con-rods, cams, valves and flowed cylinder head all adding to the upped output. "It should feel like a superbike in a superbike chassis," says Mark McCarville, although it runs more horsepower. "Output is similar to BSB, but thanks to refining the delivery it makes the bike easier to use." An engine is scheduled to last 3,000km, with the team just changing oil and filter after each session.





# 10 STEPS to an Endurance WEAPON

So you want to go endurance racing then. What exactly do you have to do to a bike to make sure it's competitive – and reliable. While we were waiting for our go on Guy's bike we asked Rico Penzkofer, boss of the Penz13.com team, what he does to his Beemer before it tackles the 2015 Bol D'Or.

## 1. TUNE YOUR ENGINE – BUT NOT TOO MUCH...

The temptation is to give the engine lots of power, but we have to make it reliable first. We get the engine from the BMW race department in Berlin. For an eight hour race we go with the full superbike spec' motor, but for 24-hours it's nearly at the same level as the IDM bike, just a little lower. But it is certainly more than stock. When we race at Paul Ricard with the long straight we have to have some sympathy for the engine. Then we fit parts to suit, so for example we use the same radiator as on the superbike. We use a bigger H2O radiator, made in Italy. We don't use a high weight oil to help it over 24 hours, but halfway through the race we will add half a litre of oil, through a syringe via a special valve, at one of the pit stops.

## 2. MAKE THE BIKE COMFORTABLE

Handlebar position and rearset position is a compromise for all the riders, but we know it is in an easy position to ride. You need an easy bike, and not a heavy bike. The other bikes you are testing here, you need to focus everything on speed. But this bike has to be able to offer a rider to get into a good rhythm. The riders have to do the same lap times after 24 hours.

## 3. SLING ON THE SUZZIES

The choice of suspension is free, and the rules say we could use an electronic system, but we use the FGR300 Öhlins front fork and the Öhlins TTX shock at the rear. We change the yokes and also the suspension linkage. There are many, many things we can change with the bike, and not just with the suspension.



## 4. SORT OUT THE PIT STOPS

You have to modify front and rear for quick wheel changes. The modification is not so much on the

swingarm, but to make the sprocket captive so only the wheel comes out. The swingarm is the original unit. Many teams use a wider swingarm, but we prefer to use a smaller one for the



**LEFT TO RIGHT:** A truly sexual front end fit for WSB. Standard lights do the job well, and are, er, light. Another radial rear caliper. The bike goes up on stands. Trick yoke, even trickier mode buttons to suit conditions.







performance. At the front for wheel changes, the axle comes out, then it comes forward, then the calipers go out on a spring to get out of the way. We put the bike up on paddock stands, front and

rear. It takes us six seconds to change the wheels. We change front and rear on almost every stop, so in a race we will use up to 45 tyres. I save the best fronts for the end of the race.

## 5. FILL HER UP

We have a big tank, we have to. To fill using the quickfiller takes six and a half seconds. That is 24 litres of fuel going into the bike, and that will last one hour on a twisty track, less on a track with a big straight. A good pit stop is 40 seconds.

## 6. BUY IN SOME BRAKES

We use the forged Brembo calipers and thicker discs, and in a 24 hour race we will change the brake pads at halfway, or at a track like Le Mans we will change twice. We do this by changing the caliper as a whole, as we have a dry break system that makes it very easy to swap the calipers over. The calipers themselves are the forged Brembos.

## 7. STICK ON SOME LIGHTS

For races at night, we use the standard lighting system at the front. It is light and offers very good vision at night. At the rear we just use a small LED light and the bike's number have to be lit.

## 8. SAVE IT IN A CRASH

We have to make it easily rebuildable, so you look at the bike and we have parts ready to replace as a whole in the event of a crash. So we have whole bars ready with everything on them, the fuel tank is only on with two bolts. We don't have the electronics under the seat, we protect them at the front of the bike. We also relocate the battery. We also have a big slider and engine protection. The biggest problem is a crash, but at the last race at Oschersleben we had to change a clutch 30 minutes before the end. The bike was very hot, obviously, but we changed it in four minutes and ten seconds. The hands of the mechanics were not so good after this!

## 9. FIND A BIG SPONSOR

We change so much on the bike. We basically keep the frame, swingarm and wheels, then we change the rest. Then we have to keep it, and everyone else, going for 24 hours, which is enormously expensive.

## 10. KEEP THE HEATED GRIPS ON

People laugh, but we keep the heated grips on. The riders all love it when it's about six degrees in the night at Le Mans!





WORDS: CARL 'PRETTY BOY' STEVENS PICS: IMPACT IMAGES

# Maxxis Supermaxx ST

Maxxis, the biggest tyre company you've barely heard of, has released its first all new tyre since 2010. So we headed to Ascari in Spain to give them a proper good spanking...



*Sports touring tyres on track. On a Suzuki GSX-R1000? You betcha!*





**W**e all know how important those big black hoops are by now, and to say I'm a big fan of sports touring tyres is an understatement. Why? Well, what's not to love? Having spent a lot of time on Bridgestone's T30, I know they offer bundles of confidence on the roads. They give a good feeling from below without being too hard and harsh – especially when you want to push on a bit compared to a standard long-lasting tyre.

These new Maxxis Supermaxx STs are promised to be as good as the Bridgestones, for about £30 less! A bold claim indeed. On paper everything about the new Supermaxx STs looks impressive. Developed over the last five years, Maxxis has really gone to town developing these hoops, the firm even changed all of its R&D machinery specifically

for them. This shows in the amount of snazzy features that are new and specific to this tyre.

Alongside a whole new 'Lightning Sipe' pattern design, the tread gives improved traction in the wet (which unfortunately we couldn't test out in sunny Spain). The Supermaxx ST also has an all new construction made of a spiral steel belt, which enhances cornering stability. In fact, pretty much everything is brand new, which bodes well considering the MA-3DS and M6029 that they replace were decent performers.

To ease myself in to the new rubber and to get acquainted with the awesome Ascari track I, er, opted straight for the ZX-10R. We followed BSB legend and Maxxis development rider Chris 'The Stalker' Walker for our sighting laps. Being as clever as I am I have a 🍷





*Ascari is stunning. The tyres are pretty good, too!*

» pretty big slide on the first lap, which reminds me not to take the piss on a track that is incredibly green and slippery while on cold and unscrubbed tyres. Lesson learned.

Aside from this, the tyres scrub in quickly, and I make a point of coming in to see how well they heat up. While the track temp isn't very high yet the rubber is nicely warm, which is an exceptional quality for those of us stuck riding in the cold, damp confines of the United Kingdom.

Now, Ascari, the millionaire's playground for anyone who doesn't know, is an absolute rollercoaster of a track. It's tackled hard only with bundles of confidence, and for the first hour or two the tyres struggled with the slippery surface and the cooler temperatures. On the big ZX-10R the rear was spinning up a lot, but the slides were slow, snapped back nicely while the front was drifting slightly from the apex at full lean; meaning it took me almost an hour to get my knee down. It certainly reminds you they aren't quite slicks, but the grip is still impressive nonetheless considering the conditions we were riding in.

Moving on from the Ninja I decided to head out on a few naked bikes, and to give the MA-ST's a fairer chance with the Kawasaki Z800 and Suzuki GSR750 being the weapons of choice. Instantly the tyres felt a lot more at home; with less ground clearance and softer power delivery they weren't as close to their limits, and with an increasing track temperature they just got better and better with every lap. Before long you almost forget that they're made for touring. They give huge stability and precision; even through Ascari's mega fast fourth gear kinks.

With buckets of confidence I decided to head out on a KTM RC8 R to give the tyres a another try with some heat and rubber already laid down. I didn't tell anyone for obvious reasons, but I was trying quite hard to crash (without crashing) to see how they handled under pressure. They didn't disappoint. Getting sideways through turn two the rear just snaps back in line, while pushing

## CHRIS WALKER: BSB LEGEND

"I can't believe how much grip these tyres give, especially the front. Having been a part of the project from the very beginning I'm over the moon to see how they've turned out, and what better place to test than the beautiful Ascari."

## RUDY VERSTEEG: MAXXIS GERMANY

"We are incredibly happy with the feedback from the tyre on track. Although we must stress it is a sports touring tyre it has surpassed our expectations and everyone is enjoying being out on them. We have gathered some more valuable data for our technicians back in Taiwan and now it is not long before we will have them out the door."

## A LITTLE BIT ABOUT ASCARI:

If Carlsberg did racetracks, it would end up much like Ascari. Being the longest track in Spain, it's 3.65-miles of pure heaven, with undulation after undulation and a variety of corners from first gear hairpins to fifth gear kinks. Everything about the track is exciting down to the walls that surround the banked sections; making it probably the most incredible track I've been to. I'd love to shake Klaas Zwart's hand, the Dutch millionaire who built the place, for making such an immense place for us mortals to come and do some skids and wheelies on. I mean seriously test out new motorcycle tyres...



*...the record shows, I took the blows, and did it myyyyyy waaaaaay...*





*The ST's natural habitat*

the front into the hairpins it makes the apex nicely; albeit feeling like it's starting to tuck slightly, but nothing major.


The most impressive aspect, however, was the state of the tyres. With the next outing on a Suzuki GSX-R1000 I did a dozen-lap stint, which is a fair old way around the longest race track in Spain in almost 30-degree heat. Fair to say I was more knackered than the rubber! No chewing, no blueing (from the overheating) and not even any major obvious wear, even though I gave them a rough old time. According to the Maxxis technicians who flew in from Taiwan, this is all thanks to a new coupling agent called Silane, which contains less oil so it doesn't overheat – while also maintaining a soft feeling for a relatively hard tyre. Bravo, Maxxis, I approve. But what about on the roads?

After hooning around Ascari for the day and seeing how well the tyres handled on track, we were absolutely buzzing to get out on the beautiful Spanish roads. Starting on Kawasaki's Z800, I was greeted with excellent stability from the off, and the tyres really took the bumpy nature of the Tarmac well. We

were taken through some of the most beautiful routes I've ever seen on some of the tightest and windiest roads I've ridden on – and the Maxxis Supermaxx ST's didn't even give a glimmer of letting go. The only moments we had were through the routes where the locals transport the olives. It felt here as if we were on ice, but we were told that this was just normal. Crazy, aye?

All in all I was pleasantly surprised at the abilities of these tyres. Even when being a massive fool on track they kept me upright with ease, so anyone who is dubious of taking a sports touring tyre on track shouldn't be.

It makes the perfect tyre for any heavy throttle rider who wants that bit more grip on the edge than a touring tyre, but more longevity than a devoted sports tyre. It's definitely up there with the competition in my humble and honest opinion.

Maxxis announced that they'll be priced competitively at about £200 a set in a huge array of sizes for a massive selection of bikes, which will be available to you fine public folk in Spring 2016. Consider giving them a try, you may well be surprised. 



*But still good here too!*



*The STs suit a range of bikes*



*Do you think Carl's colour blind?*

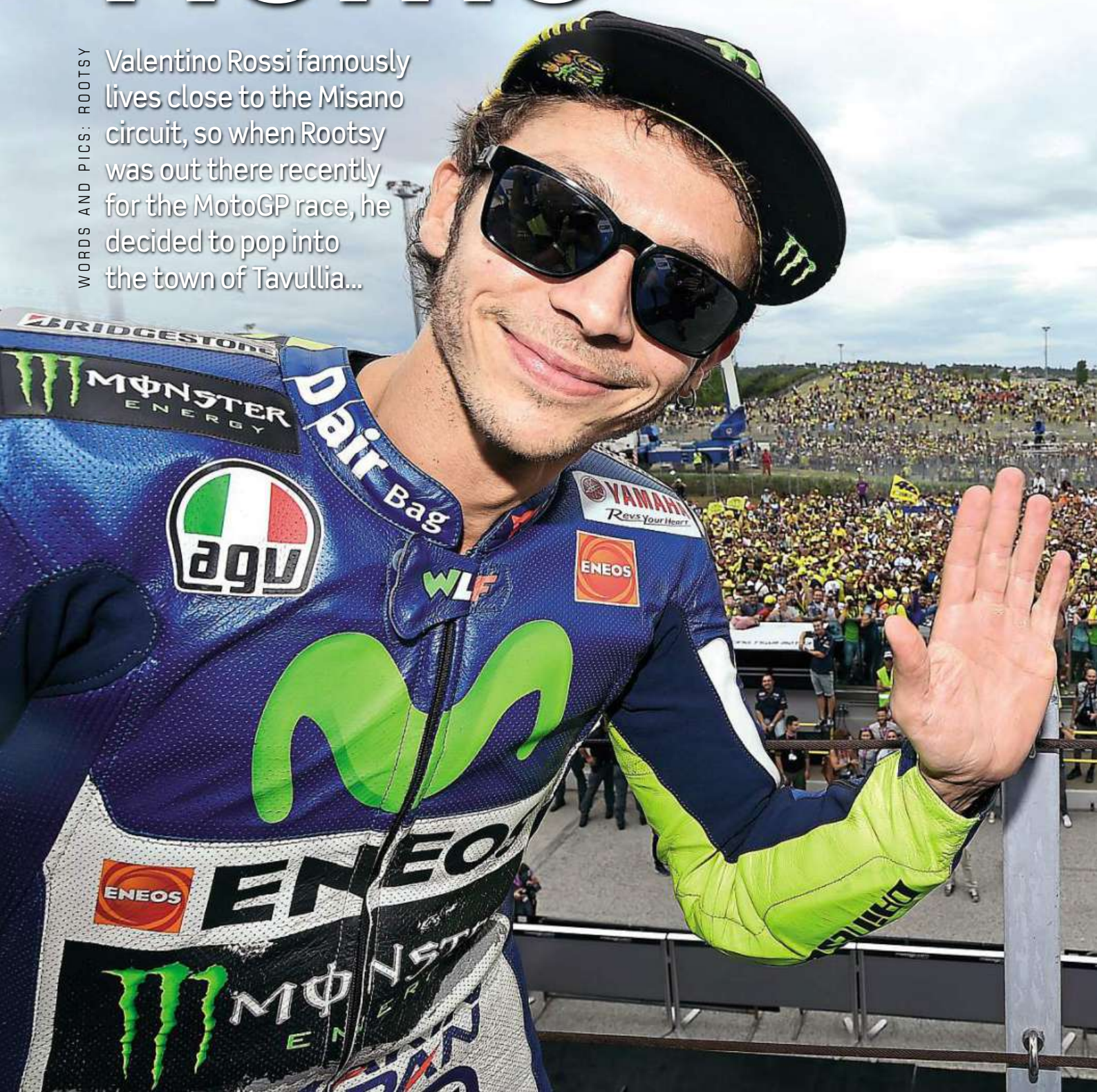


*Proper good on the right tool...*



# Welcome Home

WORDS AND PICS: ROOTSY  
Valentino Rossi famously lives close to the Misano circuit, so when Rootsy was out there recently for the MotoGP race, he decided to pop into the town of Tavullia...







It's the two tourist buses, long line of cars and a scattering of bikes parked up on the road's verge with a 100-plus throng of tourists disgorged from said vehicles and now posing for the camera in front of the infamous town sign that lets you know that you've reached Valentino Rossi's home, Tavullia.

I've driven the ten minutes or so from the Misano circuit to Rossi's home, both literal and spiritual, expecting to see a few 46 signs, a smattering of yellow and not much more – but what I'm greeted with is a town utterly devoted to its most famous son. I've come on a bit of a pilgrimage to try and understand a bit more about Valentino Rossi; namely where he's come from – and where he's going to.

In the form of his life, that weekend's race at Misano was a pivotal turning point in the 2015 world championship. Perhaps not the ultimate defining moment, but integral to the story of the season so far. However, it's his home life that is crucial to the wider Rossi story, for had he not been brought up here there's a real chance that we'd simply be driving through the town of Urbino – or more likely back to the track. Aside from the town's averagely impressive churches, there's not much to stop a passing tourist, and the fact that Rossi hails from the town has been grasped with by two hands by its inhabitants.

Ordinarily you might expect a little show of support for the local sports star – a few stickers, posters and the odd flag to signal willing. In the UK, the Post Office coloured post boxes gold for British athletes that won Olympic medals in the 2012 games, but that would be almost the only give-away of a star hailing from the area. Otherwise, I've not seen a shrine in Stevenage for Lewis Hamilton, no number tens around Croxteth for our 50-goal football captain Wayne Rooney, nor supporting Speedos around Plymouth for Tom Daley.

Tavullia, on the other hand, is a mass of yellow and number 46s everywhere. The town bursts with pride, and this spills out into flags adorning every lamp post, 46s wrapped along the crash barriers, every tree covered with a 46 round it. Get to Misano on race weekend and everyone inside is devoted to VR46, queuing from before daylight to get into the track ready for a day of flag waving. Yellow colours every stand, every twitch from their





Say formaggio!



Where are we again?

The busiest shop in town



man results in a yell, a gasp or a scream. It's not like the few flags you get carrying Cal Crutchlow's or Scott Redding's names at Silverstone – this is full blown devotion to a single man. Their hero.

But when it comes to Tavullia itself, it all starts from the town sign that's now daubed in stickers and graffiti galore, all in adoration to Rossi. It's a few hundred metres before it becomes more built up, and then on the run up the main street you see a gigantic poster of Rossi drawing you ever closer to what counts as the town square. Once parked up, no mean feat over the course of a MotoGP weekend, I spent an hour or so just soaking everything up, pondering to what extent the town made the man – and how the man is now making the town.

The first sign of its importance to Rossi is when you spy a vista from between the houses. Look towards the coast and you can see the hotels on the Adriatic strip, and beyond this is perhaps one of the biggest reasons behind Rossi's success – the beach. A sandy shoreline means everything to young Italian kids, and as soon as Rossi was able to jump on a scooter at 14, he charged off with his mates to gawp at the girls on the beaches of Riccione. This meant only one thing – making his little scooter go as fast as humanly possible. Head further inland and the roads get curvier as the hills get higher, so just in geography alone Rossi's upbringing brought with it significant advantages – as did running

from the police. The Tribe of Chihuahua, Rossi's mates, Uccio and a dozen more, did what kids of that age did, all on two wheels, and this in itself laid the foundation for daring, mischief, taking risks and having fun.

Another plus was that the area is alive with pocket racing clubs, tuners, fans and fierce rivals. Up and down this coastline are little tracks taken over from car parks where battles are fought between kids who are plonked on a bike and told to go fast – like greyhounds, really. But when you've got an ex-GP racer as a Dad, some contacts to concoct tasty minimotos and the eager enthusiasm to spend every waking moment on a bike you've got yet more evidence that the area is a special place in the story.

A final piece of the puzzle is that Rossi's mother and father had split, so there was one more reason to go out on the scooter, between Tavullia and his mum's in Montecchio, to hone his developing skills. This hilly road held him in good stead when he raced along the Panoramica, a 22km stretch of sinuous Tarmac that challenged any young scooter rider's skills. This was then transferred to the area's impromptu racetracks, like the Pistino, in the industrial estates closer to the sea.

The Panoramica and Pistino may not feature in the lives of up and coming riders today, but the Misano circuit and its MotoGP race is a permanent feature in the area. The place swarms with supporters from around the planet every September, but the vast







Part of the Fan Club's display



Rossi's ranch is visible from the road...



Cap that!



majority of the fans are local and it's this that makes it a different event to the race at Mugello. The place heaves by eight in the morning, and anyone selling anything yellow or with the number 46 does a roaring trade.

Speaking of which, back at Tavullia is Rossi's fan club, shop, cafe and pizza parlour – Da Rossi. There are other stores in town doing a decent trade in Rossi products, authorised or otherwise, but you have to visit this enterprise for the full Tavullia experience. It's a slickly run enterprise, with the fan club signing up new members at a great pace, while those just presented with their membership card then wander into the labyrinth ahead. A coffee shop offers half decent coffee and cakes, a gelato range of ice creams, before heading out to the back to the shop proper where if you can fit a 46 on it, it gets flogged.

On the Friday of the GP weekend it's busy, busy, busy. Italians, Brits, South Africans, Austrians and Germans swell the numbers to well above the official population of 4,000. The cafe staff are kind enough not to give Brits asking for a latte a cup of milk, the kids lap up the ice cream, while eyes lock in on the giant TV screens inside and out on FP1 at the track a few kilometres away. You can't quite hear it. As the crowd flies it's probably six miles away, but it's close. The patio area behind the cafe is a beautiful spot, with views out towards the sea, and with the temperature climbing into the mid-twenties it feels like life just can't get any better. We're all fans together, kicking back and loving life in the surroundings. Deliveries of coffee, 46 branded Monster energy drinks and more merchandise come in, forcing the woman doing the Rossi lottery that helps local causes to shift her pitch away from the patio entrance.

And the great thing? None of it feels exploitative. Alright, you're not being served by Rossi himself (Hi, I'm Valentino and I'll be your waiter) but an espresso is what you'd pay in a cafe on the beach (€1.50), a bottle of Corona is €4, pizzas are six or seven euros, and you can choose from a variety of ice cream sundaes – from the Rossi to the Hailwood (you know you've made it when Rossi names an ice cream after you...). The fan club has knocked up a free shrine to Rossi and his mates next door, a load of cardboard cut-outs and pictures of nearly all of his race win antics – the last few yet to be added.

Tavullia, in part, made Rossi the man he is, and he, in turn, is making Tavullia what it is today. His business is run in a big office down the road (doing lots of merchandise and the like – and not just for him, his VR46 firm also handles Marc Marquez's 93 range along with many others in the paddock). He's employing lots in his venture in town, he doesn't seem to mind too much about the less official stuff, and in return he receives devotion from the whole town – an errant Kawasaki flag being the single sign of any dissent.

In short, if you're going to the GP at Misano (or the WSB for that matter), you have to go to Tavullia, too. Rossi may not be walking up and down the high street, but there's a sense that he's close. Take your binoculars and you may spot some action happening at his ranch, chat to the locals about when they last saw him and what he was like as a kid, sup some nice coffee and regale in tales from the tourists – because there will be lots of those, guaranteed...

## THE MAGIC AROUND MISANO

There seems to be something in the water around Misano. Valentino Rossi hails from close by the track, while the list of others from the area is mightily impressive...






*addiction*

PETE LE CHEMINANT'S

# KTM RC8 R TRACK

KTM's RC8 R Track is already pretty darn fine as it comes, but Pete's is rather special under the hood too...



**I** bought a 1982 1100 R Honda from a very small picture in the paper, but had to sell it to buy an engagement ring and a plot of land. Then years later I saw another very small picture of KTM's RC8 and thought it was a bit of a departure for KTM to go into superbikes, but I liked the look of it so thought I'd have one. I bought one, but I've now got four! My first was the fourth imported into the UK, then I fancied the Akrapovic version, so got that too. We went on to break our local sprint record on it, and I'd caught the bug. I saw the Track version had been released, so got one of those, and then got in touch with Mick at Bike Sport Developments. This bike has his full Magneti Marelli superbike electronics kit on it, about £20,000 worth all told, which has launch control, traction control, and so on, it's an incredible bit of kit. To me it's an absolute work of art. I've now got the Martin Bauer replica version too, which makes it four, but I'm off to the bank this afternoon to see if I can still run the four of them!" 



*addiction*

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## MODIFICATIONS

### PETE LE CHEMINANT'S KTM RC8 R TRACK

#### ENGINE:

Club race kit (165bhp rear wheel)  
Akrapovic Evo 4 exhaust  
Adjusted valve timing  
Magneti Marelli ECU  
Closed loop 'wide-band' lambda control  
Full ride-by-wire throttle

#### ELECTRONICS

Traction control  
Launch control  
Anti wheelie  
Pitlane Limiter  
Datalogger  
Blip Box up and downshift auto-blipper  
LCD race dash

#### CHASSIS

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KTM Power Parts – bars, rearsets, levers  
BST carbon wheels  
Evotech tail tidy  
Venture shield  
Puig screen







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# Getting on the gas

WORDS: JON 'JP' PEARSON  
PICS: JOE DICK, FB ARCHIVE



Following on from our braking class last month, we concentrate on the fun stuff this month - accelerating harder. If in doubt gas it? Not quite. This is a lesson in getting more drive and more speed by using your right wrist at the right time...





*Learn to gas harder and make the gaps grow...*

**A**ny old tool can nail the throttle in a straight line, but real speed comes from the corners. Going into them well makes you faster of course (covered last month), but getting the hell out the other side of a corner, getting on the power as early and as hard as you can is the sure-fire way of getting faster down the straights. Do this right and you simply get quicker earlier.

Traction control and great tyres help us more and more to get better drive and to be confident in trusting the grip available as we get on the throttle, but a bit of time spent concentrating on when in the corner you open the throttle and by how much, plus what you can do with your body to keep the bike heading in the right direction, will improve your overall speed as a rider.

As ever, when we ride our bikes we're asking for more than one force to happen at the same time because we're complex buggers and unreasonable with our demands for grip, power and speed. In any part of a corner the bike naturally wants to pick up and go straight, while all we want is to keep turning

and go faster. Off the throttle (after you've finished braking) the bike is at its happiest and most settled state. What you do next, however, is only ever going to unsettle it and make things worse – and that's the area we're concentrating on here. This guide is all about getting you using the throttle harder to exit corners and get yourself faster, sooner down the straights.

#### **Pick a corner, any corner**

Where to practice getting on the gas harder is down to you. Good places to learn the feel of your bike accelerating hard can be anywhere; traffic lights, out of junctions, slip roads, and so on. But the ultimate aim is to get you confident in opening the throttle harder out of corners so choose a corner or two, on a trackday if you can.

A good corner will be one you are happy riding and are used to. You don't need to be howling into the corner, late on the brakes, decking your elbow down and trying your hardest all the way through it. Concentrate on one part of your riding at a time to keep »



*Aim to be laying down darkies by lunchtime!*





*Wring it's neck, when it's safe...*



*Body position is crucial, so work on feeling comfortable with the taps fully open*

Things simple. What is important is you're settled and on a good line in the middle of the corner so you can come on the gas and drive out from the apex.

The key markers to concentrate on are your line. You need to have the line nailed and be hitting the apex consistently. The point in the corner where you are going to open the throttle is key too, so pick a point and stick to it. Your aim should be to hit those markers each time through the corner.

#### **Gear up**

Step one is to get your corner right as detailed above, but step two is to try and get happier with using the throttle harder. Instead of jumping into the deep end where all the tyre-testing power in your engine lurks, where power is more aggressive in lower gears, and scaring the shite out yourself in a very real game of Risk, try instead using a gear higher, maybe two gears higher and work on your throttle technique first.

Teach yourself when you can come on the gas, how hard you can and in doing this you can get a better understanding of how well your tyres respond. The point is to help you learn the accelerating characteristics of your bike and to teach yourself to use the throttle more.

Do it in a safe place, of course, but you need to get a grasp of what it feels like to pile on the coals, to open the throttle wide and run through the rev-range right up to the red line, what you have to do with your body to deal with the accelerating force, how much does the suspension lift at the front when you twist the throttle, how quick and smooth can you be with the throttle and next gear change.

#### **Don't become a passenger**

Weight will transfer when you accelerate. The harder you do it, the more the front end will be inclined to lift up – the bike will try to stand itself up and go straight. You have to dictate what happens with your body as you ask for power. This shouldn't be an exercise in hanging on for dear life, so don't make the classic mistake of falling back as the bike accelerates hard and opening the throttle at the same time the more you slip back in the seat. The important thing is you're in control and in charge of what's happening.

Most of us naturally lean in a bit to counter the tendency of the forks to extend and the front of the bike to rise as we accelerate. You will be holding on with your hands to an

*Two young 'uns happy with keeping it lit...*



*There's always an upside to accelerating hard!*



**GAS IT!**

We can't see the throttle hand here, and it probably wouldn't show much given it's a quick action gasser, but the trajectory of the bike implies that Dani is to the stop.

**PAW PRINT**

Dani's not got much weight to throw about, but those little legs of him are strong and help pick the bike up off the edge of the tyre.

**WEIGHT FOR IT**

Forks extended with weight shoved back to the rear.

**STRESSED OUT**

Dani's rear Bridgestone is trying to deal with nearly 250bhp going through a contact patch as big as your wrist, but it's all on the fat part of the hoop.

extent, but don't do it too tight (that can emphasise the white knuckle, uncoordinated opening of the throttle). You're holding on with the your hands, but not doing a death grip on the bars because you still need control of the throttle and clutch at least. Bringing your chest down and into the bike helps prevent your torso from being left behind (effectively sitting up) as you accelerate. Grip the tank with your knees, too. You're leaning in to go with the bike though, go with the flow if you like. It is a natural tendency but also a positive attitude to adopt with your body.

Your feet are important, arguably more important. Accelerating harder needs good foot position and you definitely need to use your feet to hold your body in place, so push down onto the pegs. Your feet are both holding you there along with stomach and back muscles but they are also your chief way of steering and influencing the direction the bike takes – push your right foot down and your bike heads right, push left and the bike heads left. Use that to keep on the line you want. Pushing down on your feet helps keep the centre of gravity lower too.

**“ LITTLE DANI PEDROSA ILLUSTRATES THIS TECHNIQUE PERFECTLY. HE HAS TO MUSCLE THE BIKE UPRIGHT EARLY IN A CORNER AND IN AN EXAGGERATED FASHION... ”**

**Standing the bike up**

Break the corner up into pieces, segments to concentrate on and for this exercise hone in on the moment just before you come on the gas. You've got choices at this stage about what to do with your body, your bike and your throttle. On most modern sports bikes you'll get better drive by using the fatter part of the tyre and 'standing the bike up'.

It's a riding technique you'll see perfectly illustrated by racers, but in particular Dani Pedrosa. Because Pedrosa weighs 12 ounces (approx.) he has to muscle the bike upright early in a corner and in an exaggerated fashion to get best drive out the turns. Taller, heavier riders have weight and leverage they can use on corner exit, but Lil' Dani has to

hoik his RCV up good and early by pushing the outside footrest and standing the bike up to drive hard. Compare Pedrosa to a different Dan on a different kinda bike and tyre, Danny Kent in Moto3, and you'll see the marked difference.

**Use the fat part of the tyre**

Standing the bike up is also a way of saying use the fat part of the tyre to get best drive. Unless you're battling for a race win we don't need to be playing with the finer notions of getting on the power early in the corner while the bike is still leant on the edge of the tyre, particularly on less predictable road surfaces. This is not about trying to get you into a high-side situation. ☹





*Learn to jump  
out of the turns...*

» So when you've braked, turned-in, hit the apex, looked out through the corner to the corner exit and beyond (an important step to take), the next step is standing the bike up onto the fatter part of the tyre so you can come on the gas harder. Quite simply this is where you'll get more grip and more drive because you have more weight pushing on a larger surface area of the tyre. Again, we do this and control the bike mainly with our feet and it is the outside footrest that needs pushing down on to pick the bike up.

#### Ask nicely

You've got to learn to be more aggressive with the throttle without over-stepping the mark. That's why we described using a higher gear to practice and gain the 'feel'. One huge rule of thumb with modern tyres is that you can ask for unbelievable amounts of power through them but, here's a huge disclaimer of a 'but', any tyre responds better if you ask nicely. If you ask for anything too aggressively, 100 per cent throttle while you're leant right over, you're asking for trouble.

But you can still use a lot of gas and likely earlier than you think. So introduce the power progressively, feed on the throttle without treating it like a switch and ask nicely. Nicely means progressively, and progressively simply means a softer initial turn on the twist grip. Think of how the throttle works when you twist it and you'll help yourself imagine the back tyre and what you're asking of it. That doesn't mean be too soft though. Once you come on the throttle then wind it on to the stop and don't be shy. It's just the initial increments of twist that need to be cautious. Once you feel the grip is there then turn the throttle more – actively pursue getting the throttle to the stop. The key is keeping focused on where you want to go and telling your bike to keep heading that way by pushing down on your feet through the footrests to keep the line you want and fight the bike's inclination to stand up and take a straight line.

The better your tyre, suspension, bike, road or track conditions and your level of experience will affect precisely when you can feed the power on. **EB**



*Karl Muggeridge not asking  
as nicely as he should...*

*Waaaaahoooooo!*





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# LET'S OFF ROAD

**With John McGuinness!**

We all know what John McGuinness can do on a ribbon of Manx road, but what about on the dirt?







The day job – aka winning the Senior TT!

**A**n invite from Bennetts insurance to spend the day off roading at Dave Thorpe's school was quickly snaffled by Charlie. With Rootsy's hand still on the mend and BJ about as likely to take to the dirt as Jorge Lorenzo is to wear an HJC helmet next year, our intrepid sales monkey saw it as an opportunity to pitch adverts to the insurance leviathan – as well as a chance to hone his developing skills in the dirt.

While he was there, and not crashing his brains out, he also got to spend some time with John McGuinness. McPint was there on ambassadorial duty with Bennetts – handing out the Ferrero Rocher – and Charlie managed to pin him down and ask him as few questions as possible about the TT as he could. Here's what McG had to say on life, off roading, keeping fit and doing the Dakar...

#### **Fast Bikes: So how was your day Mr McGuinness, Sir?**

**McGuinness:** Oh, is this right up my street, my cup of tea. A bit of motocross, a bit of enduro, a yarn with the boys, riding with Dave Thorpe – a multiple 500cc world champion – and Steve Sword – a British Champion and Grand Prix winner his class. The weather has been kind to us, I've been on some trails I've never been on, too. We do a bit trial riding up in our area, but it's beautiful here, yeah. Happy days!



No, I don't want any adverts, thank you...

#### **FB: So how long have you been riding off road?**

**McG:** I first started riding off road maybe when I was five or six. I first started riding bikes when I was four, a little Italjet, on stabilisers for a bit, then I was flying around the industrial estates and stuff where my Dad worked. I then started doing some scrambling when I was six or seven. But it was hard for me because my Dad would shout and ball at me and the more I did it like that the less I enjoyed it. I felt a lot of pressure and stuff like that. My heart was always sold on road racing, but you couldn't road race until you were 18 then. Now, though, I'm not skint and have a bit more time off and I get on the bikes a lot. I would have loved to have done more when I started road racing for a bit of exercise and fun – but I never had a pot to piss in. I had to invest everything I earned into the road racing. But now we get out regularly. It's the best thing for training the brain to work out the connection between your head, your arse and the back tyre sliding and messing about. So we also go out in the fields on CRF125s to keep us all entertained.

#### **FB: Is there anything that directly correlates with riding on the roads and riding off road?**

**McG:** Definitely, although I think that it's a bit of double edged sword. Obviously, you can get a bit of a niggly injury from it. I rolled my bloody wrist real bad on my enduro bike a couple of years ago. It took a long time to recover, but if I don't do any motocross I get grumpy and fed up. In my own head I think I'm not doing anything. The gym's great, which a lot of my friends and other riders do, and that fine – but it's not me. I don't enjoy it. I don't enjoy that culture, looking at themselves in the mirrors and that lark. I can't get my head around all that. I just want to ride bikes and have fun, and I know in my own head when I've been riding motocross bikes I'm sharp, I'm up to speed, feeling good. You know there's a bit of bike fitness there, it helps to feel confident. So it does help, 100 per cent. Well, it helps me. »





*McGuinness has always made a splash...*

» **FB: Is that the way you keep fit?**

**McG:** Yeah, I just ride these. Even at the end of the day I was the last one on the track today. I can just keep riding round and round. It's definitely a great way to keep fit.

**FB: So in the film *Closer to the Edge* when you're on a crosstrainer, was that just for the film?**

**McG:** That was bit of a crack that, a bit of a piss take. The missus got me the crosstrainer for Christmas thinking it was great idea. I would put the TV on and do a bit of crosstraining, but I think I've only ever done about an hour on it. So in five years it's not ideal. Half of me wishes I could, and I should, put more effort on the gym side of things and losing weight as I am a bit heavy and they give me a bit of stick. Honda gives me a bit of pain – and the mechanics a bit, too. They put a lot of work in round the

clock on the bikes making it light and there you are eating pie and chips. They get a bit frustrated, you know. But I just try and do my best with my scrambling and off roading – to do it as much as I can and then I'm ready for it, I'm in shape. We've been pulling it off the last few years. I'm employed to win TTs at the end of the day, as well as doing the endurance racing, North West, Macau and few others, but its all focused on the TT and you can't do any more than win the Senior. I like the old stuff as well, growing up with the two strokes, the big 500s, proper GP circuits – it was amazing at the time, and now it's fantastic.

**FB: So would you ride off road competitively?**

**McG:** No, not done a race in a long, long time. I've had it before with this practice stuff. A rider will go, 'Oh, there's McGuinness' and

you get a young kid running me over a berm and that lot. It would only be worse in a race. So I only do it for fun and exercise. Plus I realise that I'm out of my depth sometimes...

**FB: No ambitions to Dakar or anything like that?**

**McG:** Dakar, yes. Funny enough you should say that, I did speak to Honda about it. I said I'd like to do it as a bit of a challenge one day, a bit of a bucket list thing. I don't think I could, well I know I wouldn't be able to win it, but finishing it would be an achievement. I have done a lot of things – Macau, World Endurance 24 hour races – I have done a lot of things but have never done a Dakar. I've planted the seed, I've tapped them up, so we'll see.

**FB: How did that go down?**

**McG:** Robert Watherston, my boss, thinks it's a great idea but wants me to retire first. Retire from road racing, concentrate on that, do some testing. The Dakar is not all about speed, is it? It's about knowing where you are going, getting home, navigating your way round things. I don't think those guys get the respect they deserve. You hear horror stories of how long the Dakar boys – and girls – are on the bikes for, then preparing stuff, getting dehydrated, getting cold. You name it, everything has been thrown at them. I'd like the challenge though, to see what happens. There's no other way of doing it apart from head first – really balls deep. I don't think there's anything to prepare you for it. It's a bit like the TT, there's nowhere to practice for the TT. The only way you get practice is to go down Bray Hill at 180 mph.

**FB: Right, I've got to ask about it. That last win, eh?**

**McG:** It was my finest hour, got to be. I look back it now and can't believe I did what I did really. I am just dead proud of it, I think it was a really cool thing to do. It's so competitive now, so many good riders could

*Not the only mountain  
McPint has conquered....*





win. I'm little bit older than them, but it just came from here, from the heart. I dug real deep and it feels real sweet now. I can't do it forever, I will have my day at some stage. But it's riding with these guys at the weekend, an international speedway rider and British championship motocross rider keeps me alive, you know, keeps me on my toes.

**FB: You were introduced earlier as a legend. How does that sit with you?**

**McG:** Well I suppose I have been called it, and I get called it. I don't think I'm a legend – I just get called it by other people. It's nice, but I look at Hailwood and he won 14 TT's and he was hero. Agostini and these people are up there. Joey Dunlop was an absolute hero of mine – and I'm only three wins behind him, so yeah, I suppose we are getting to legendary status. But it seems a bit weird to me though. Some people change when they get famous, but I'm still the same lad inside. I'm proud of what we have done, but would hate all that to have changed me.

**FB: So as a final question what's the worst question I could ask you, in terms what gets asked all the time and you can feel it coming?**

**McG:** I thought you were going to throw the how many more wins are you going to get and when are you going to retire. Normally those are the ones. All sorts of shit I get asked about going at that speed on the bike. Why have you got one in mind?

**FB: Just wondering what's the worst?**

**McG:** I get asked the same questions millions of times, but I just answer it. We are all doing our jobs there no worse questions than others. Some questions are irritating about injuries and death and all that, but it doesn't seem to be asked any more. 10 years ago it was always 'some of you will get killed'. Those are the questions that rattle me a bit, but you do what you do. You choose the direction you go in. There's no gun to my head, so you do what you do. I suppose they are the worst questions at the end of the day.



*Now that's what we call concentration!*

**FB: What's next, Macau?**

**McG:** I thought that was your last question? I'm at Scarborough this weekend, then at the Bol D'Or at Paul Ricard next week. Then I do a little event called the Stars of Darley in Derbyshire, I always do that, Honda support it. Then it's Macau in November, and after that it's knuckle down time and see if I can scratch another deal together with Honda and all of my other loyal sponsors, Shoei and Alpinestars. They have been with me a long time and I love them to bits, they are like my family. I have ridden with Honda from 1998 to 2002 and then 2006 to now, so it's been a long, long time. That's the next step, dot some i's, cross some t's, put it to bed and eat some Christmas pudding with the family, that's about it really. Then get out on these things and burn them back off again.


**FB: We've watched the van get packed up, so is it heading home time?**

**McG:** Yeah, I've got to. I was in the Isle of Man yesterday; two days filming with a big film crew. Did hundreds of miles yesterday,

hundreds of miles on Tuesday, 250 miles drive here, 250 miles drive back, rode my motocross bike all day. To be honest, I'm feeling a bit fucked.

**FB: Down the local tonight then?**

**McG:** Well you know what, I'm not really a drinker down the local. I'll just try and get home and see if I catch the kids before they go to bed, meeting with Honda tomorrow, Scarborough Gold Cup Saturday and Sunday – but I am not moaning because as soon as you stop no one will talk to you, you're then just an old has-been...

**FB: Old has-been? Yeah, right...** 

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## HONDA CRF250R\*

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We've teamed up with Honda again to offer you the chance to win a state-of-the-art off-road bike! This stunning Honda CRF250R is up for grabs in our free to enter competition... what are you waiting for? Enter now!



The 2016 CRF250R has a substantial top-end power boost from a new HRC-developed cylinder head, piston and con-rod, with stronger bottom-end torque and no loss of mid-range performance. And the Showa SFF-TAC-Air forks have been further improved to reduce friction and improve response and damping. The aluminium beam frame and mass centralisation programme give the bike lightning fast agility and sure-footed stability while Honda's programmable engine mapping system means riders can select one of three pre-set configurations to suit the prevailing conditions. If you're a serious MX2 competitor, this is the bike you need to ride.

#### SPECIFICATION:

- 249cc single cylinder engine
- Showa 49mm inverted air suspension SFF-TAC forks
- Aluminium twin tube frame
- 260mm hydraulic wave disc brake
- Engine Mode Select Button on handlebars
- Fuel Injected

#### ENGINE

Type: Liquid-cooled 4-stroke single cylinder uni-cam  
Displacement: 249cc  
Max. Power Output: 29.4kW @ 11,500rpm

#### FRAME

Type: Aluminium twin tube

#### CHASSIS

Seat Height: 951mm

Ground Clearance: 322mm

Kerb Weight: 105.6kg

#### SUSPENSION

##### Front:

Showa 49mm inverted SFF-TAC air fork (310mm stroke)

##### Rear:

Showa monoshock using Honda Pro-Link system (317.6mm stroke, 133mm axle travel) Dunlop MX52 tyres.

Enter at the Classic Dirt Bike Magazine stand at the International Dirt Bike Show 2015, where the bike will be on display, or enter online at [www.dirtbikeshow.co.uk](http://www.dirtbikeshow.co.uk). The winner will be the first name selected at random.

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# Used Bike Guide





# 2007 – 2008 DUCATI DESMOSEDICI RR

## A class APART

A proper MotoGP bike with lights?  
That sounds familiar...



**S**orry, we have to start this used guide with a bit of an apology. Let's get it out in the open now – very few of us are ever going to own a Ducati Desmosedici RR. That's just fact. This is a bike that costs the same as a house extension to buy, the price of a used bike to insure every year, and as for the 22,000-mile service or the financial ruin a small spill would lead to, well that's just not worth considering.

But that doesn't stop us dreaming about owning what is, and in many ways remains, the only true MotoGP replica on the road – and it's still about £100,000 cheaper than Honda's road going RC213V-S...

Ducati initially announced it was going to do what the Japanese never had the bollocks to do in 2004 at the World Ducati Weekend. While the latest breed of Japanese litre bikes claimed to have 'MotoGP DNA in their veins', the truth of the matter was that they were a far cry from the racers. For a start only Yamaha and Kawasaki were competing with an inline four as Honda had a v-five and Suzuki a v-four, but that was just the tip of the iceberg. When you looked at chassis, swingarm, suspension, even firing order, the racers were nothing like the road bikes. Ducati, on the other hand, actually promised to turn an authentic MotoGP bike into a road going machine. Surely it was exaggerating slightly? In 2006 we discovered it wasn't!

The Desmosedici RR doesn't only share its DNA with the GP6 MotoGP bike that Loris Capirossi and Sete Gibernau competed on



**PRICE GUIDE:** £39,999 - £65,000

**Cheapest private:** £n/a

You don't sell a Desmo in a private sale. Well, not currently!

**Cheapest dealer:** £39,999

2,230 miles, lovely example with race exhaust fitted.

**Most expensive dealer:** £64,980

1 mile, Rosso Desmo, box fresh.

**Our choice dealer:** £61,980

44 miles, GP7 exhaust in the Team colours.

**Ex-demo:** n/a

in the final year of the 990cc animals, it is basically identical. Bar a few tweaks to ensure the engine won't shit itself before its first 7,500-mile service, the Desmo is to all intents and purposes a GP6 MotoGP bike with lights. Want any more proof? Just check out the specs.

As MotoGP was reducing in capacity to 800cc, Ducati took the unprecedented steps of releasing a full technical breakdown of its outgoing GP6 bike when it released the Desmo. This not only gave race geeks a massive hard-on, it allowed road riders to see

What dreams are made of...





## DAMAGE

Desmos fall into two camps – used and cherished. A surprising number of owners take their bikes on track and damage can occur. Although fairing panels and the carbon seat unit are still available from Ducati, they cost a fortune. Don't expect to buy a scratched Desmo and fix it on the cheap...

## WHEELS

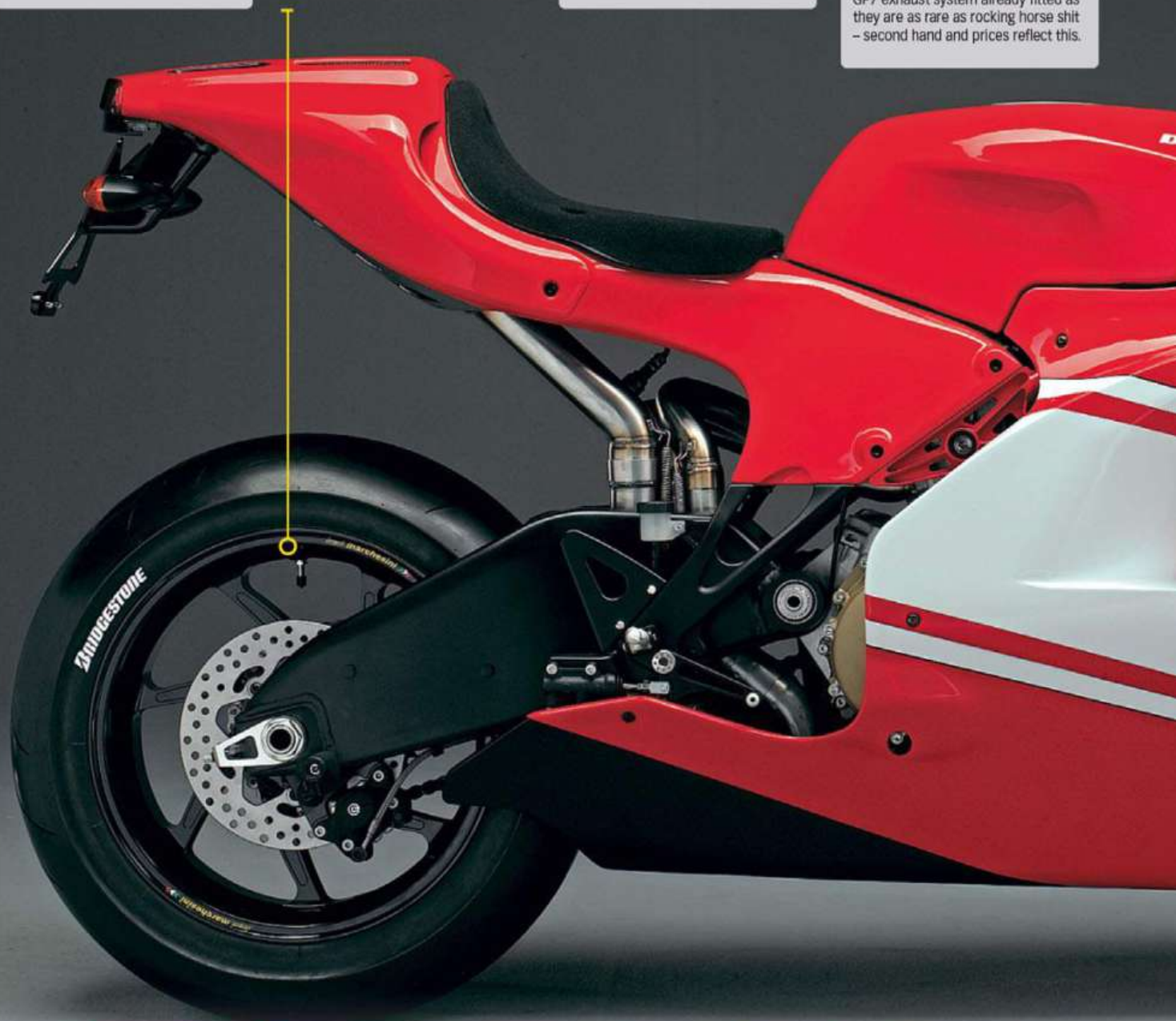
How much is a set of Desmo wheels? How does £10,000 sound? A lot of owners swap the wheels for cheaper items that not only allows the use of conventional 17-inch tyres, it also keeps the stock wheels safe! Check any bike for sale actually has that unique 16-inch rear fitted.

## TYRES

The only manufacturer to make a tyre to fit the Desmo's unique 16-inch rear wheel is Bridgestone. While there was a drought of them a few years ago, this is now over and you can pick up a new BT-01R rear for around £299. The front costs £159 and while it isn't a unique size, you need the BT-01F to match the rear...

## EXHAUST

In 2007, Ducati sold a GP7 exhaust pack that cost £5,000 and contained a titanium exhaust, new carbon belly pan, new carbon seat unit, race ECU and air filter – making it seem fairly reasonable. Unsurprisingly, Ducati sold out and it is no longer available. If you want your Desmo to bark like thunder, you need to buy one with a GP7 exhaust system already fitted as they are as rare as rocking horse shit – second hand and prices reflect this.



A sexy snout



Full factory cockpit



One hell of a swinger



## PRICE

A few years ago, prices for the Desmo dropped to near £25,000, however nowadays they are back on the up. Expect to pay in the region of £40,000 for a used one, £50,000 for a low mileage example, and £65,000 for a zero-mile bike.

## SUSPENSION

There is nothing to fear with the gas pressurised forks and they are easily rebuilt by an Öhlins specialist. As standard they aren't set very well and benefit greatly from a bit of careful set-up work. The same is true of the Öhlins shock.

ENGINE	Type	998cc, liquid-cooled, 16v, desmo V-four
	Bore x stroke	86 x 42.56mm
	Compression	13.5:1
	Fuelling	Magnetti Marelli digital fuel injection
	Tested Power	177bhp @ 13,300rpm
CHASSIS	Tested Torque	103Nm @ 10,300rpm
	Frame	Steel trellis/carbon subframe
	F Suspension	43mm inverted Öhlins gas pressurised forks, fully-adjustable
	R suspension	Öhlins monoshock, fully-adjustable, twin-speed
	Front brakes	Four-piston Brembo radial callipers, 330mm discs
DIMENSIONS	Rear brake	Two-piston caliper, 240mm disc
	Wheelbase	1,437mm
	Seat Height	830mm
	Dry Weight	171kg
	Fuel Capacity	15-litres
SPEED	0-60	n/a
	0-100	n/a
	0-150	n/a
	Stg ¼ mile	9.49sec @ 152.80mph
	Standing mile	n/a
	Top speed	188.2mph

## SPEAK TO AN EXPERT

If you are serious about wanting a Desmo, give the guys at Ducati Coventry a call. John Hackett's team know everything there is to know about the Desmo and are almost certain to have an idea where a good one is for sale.  
[www.ducaticoventry.com](http://www.ducaticoventry.com)

## SERVICE HISTORY

The Desmo was subject to quite a few 'technical updates' throughout its life and if the bike hasn't been looked after by an authorised Ducati dealership these won't have been completed. Why chance £50,000 on a bike you can't be 100 per cent sure of its history?

## SERVICING

Amazingly, the annual service costs of a Desmo are fairly reasonable, however this all goes wrong at 22,000 miles when the engine needs its heads removed and the valves de-coked. This is a massive job that will take over ten hours in labour before you factor in the £400 head gasket, potentially new titanium valves, etc. A 22,000-mile service usually costs in the region of £3,000, provided all goes well...

just how close the Desmo actually was to the racer. The results were impressive. Not only does the Desmo's V4 share the same 989cc capacity as the GP6, it has the same 82mm bore and 42.56mm stroke as the GP bike, not to mention the twin-pulse firing order and desmo drive system with gear driven cams. Ducati wasn't lying, the Desmo really was a GP bike for the road. And the similarities didn't stop there...

As well as sand cast cases, the Desmo's engine came loaded with titanium internals, a cassette gearbox and a stratospheric compression ratio that was all finished off with magnesium engine covers and sump. Ducati claimed the net result was a bike that thumped out 200bhp, which in 2006 was simply mind-blowing and made even the more special by the fact it shouted its presence via an exhaust system that exited through the seat unit and was

shrouded in F1-spec heat resistant material. And as if this wasn't enough to spin your head, the chassis was equally special.

In 2006 Ducati was still relying on good old fashioned tubular steel frames rather than disastrous monocoques, but this 'old school' technology was mated to a self-supporting carbon seat unit and aluminium swingarm that was beefier than a cup of Bovril. Add to this forged magnesium Marchesini wheels (the rear was

a MotoGP-matching 16-inch item), a carbon fairing and the first gas-pressurised forks on a 'production' bike and the Desmo more than justified its £40,000 price tag, despite it lacking any electronic assists. The fact only 1,500 were ever made was simply the icing on the cake. Did it work? This was a MotoGP replica with lights, of course it worked!

Riding a Desmo is a very special experience that very few will ever have the pleasure of



*I am Loris Capirossi (except my missus isn't a giraffe...)*



## RUNNING COSTS

Service interval:  
Minor: **7,500m/one year**  
Major: **15,000m/two years**  
Engine overhaul: **22,000m**

Service costs:  
Minor: **£350.00**  
Major: **£500.00**  
Engine overhaul: **£3,000.00**

Right fairing: **£2,304.91**

RH Engine casing: **£120.00**

Front brake assembly: **£623.60**  
(lever not sold separately)

feeling. And, unlike so many race reps, it actually is a pleasure. The amazing sound of the off-beat V4 'twin-pulse' on full-chat is just the start; when the V4's power kicks in the whole ride goes up a gear while the world goes into reverse. It's not an animal and actually has a very predictable throttle response, it's just bloody fast and the V4 engine lulls you into a false sense of security that sees the speed increase without real warning. Thankfully the running gear can deal with very fast cornering...

The Desmo's chassis was designed around the GP6 and as such is stiffer than a teenager who has accessed private browsing. On the road the suspension is harsh, the brakes super sharp and the seating position both hot and uncomfortable. But who gives a shit? This is a GP bike with lights, it's meant to be a bit aggressive!

In an age of 200bhp litre bikes that come loaded with cutting edge electronics, on the face of it the Desmo might not appear that special. However, that isn't the point. Yes, modern machines probably handle better, accelerate faster and cost less, but they aren't true MotoGP replicas and that's why the Desmosedici RR remains unique.

Selling everything you own is a small price to pay if there is a possibility of having a Desmosedici in your garage. This is, quite simply, a stunning machine in every possible way. At the moment prices are peaking, but will the Desmo bubble continue to expand or pop? That's the chance you take when you enter this world, but given the bike is a third of the price of a new Honda RC213V-S, it's a bargain! **EB**

## ALSO CONSIDER THESE:

### HONDA NR750

1992

**Private** £70,000  
**Dealer** £75,000  
Still the only bike to come with oval pistons, the Honda NR750 is a wonderful case of pointless Honda technological willy waving. Sound familiar?

**Engine** 747cc, I/c, 32v, V-four  
**Power** 125bhp @ 14,000rpm  
**Torque** 64Nm @ 10,000rpm



### DUCATI 1199 SUPERLEGGERA

2008

**Private** £45,000  
**Dealer** £50,000  
The maddest, baddest, Panigale to date. Built purely to showcase what Ducati can do if they feel the urge. And boy does it work wonderfully well.

**Engine** 1,198cc, I/c, 8v desmo V-twin  
**Power** 185bhp @ 10,500rpm  
**Torque** 123Nm @ 10,800rpm



### APRILIA RSV4 RF

2015

**Private** n/a  
**Dealer** £18,135  
The latest, greatest, V4 comes from Aprilia. The RSV is basically a GP bike that was developed to dominate WSB racing, a goal it certainly achieved.

**Engine** 999cc, I/c, 16v, V-four  
**Power** 182bhp @ 13,100rpm  
**Torque** 108Nm @ 11,000rpm



## Verdict 10/10

It's a MotoGP bike with lights, how could that ever score anything less than 10?

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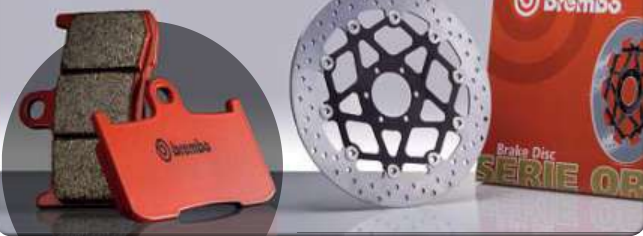
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# Market Place

Welcome to the Fast Bikes market place. What the hell is that, we hear you ask? Well, it's a place where we're going to focus our attention on a particular category of bike to give you an idea of what bikes are available for sale – and what sort of prices you should be paying. Get stuck in!

**T**his month we're focusing on winter hacks. Tis the season to be jolly – except if you're out on your pride and joy and the road salt is eating away at it. Yup, there's no getting away from the fact that the best way to keep your pride and joy immaculate is to keep it under wraps throughout winter. If you've got an expensive bike, its residual value could fall significantly if it gets ruined by winter – service costs will increase too. So over the course of one season alone, you could fund a winter hack through potential future savings.

So that means buying something to replace it being ridden through the cold. A winter

hack doesn't have to be a belter – more like something solidly built and reliable to get you through the months ahead. But you shouldn't be paying a fortune for one. Rein in your sporting ambitions and look for an all rounder that should shrug off the salt. This isn't a carte blanche to stop washing a machine, rather a licence to not spend all weekend cleaning a bike.

So what should you be looking for? Fazers, Hornets, SV650s, this sort of bike. The motors on them are strong, so that should offer a big tick. But the key to buying a winter hack is to not spend a fortune on new bits, so look for decent tyres, brakes, chains, sprockets and

the like. Bumps and scrapes you should be able to live with – so long as it's straight.

What else? These bikes will be older, so if you're looking at a carbide bike, be warned that carb

icing may happen. A fuel additive can help here, but be warned. If you're going to spend extra money, get some generic crash bungs and some heated handlebar grips.

## SEARCH FOR: WINTER HACK

**What:** 2001 Suzuki SV650

**Price:** £850

**They say:** Good overall condition, problem with indicators, needs new rear tyre, disability forces sale.

**We say:** Perfect for the job, only 16,000 miles, problems sound minor, and there may be some negotiation room...



**What:** 1998 Kawasaki ZX-6R G1

**Price:** £895

**They say:** Great runner, good tyres and brakes. 60k miles but the paintwork isn't the best job.

**We say:** Batter them down by £100 and so long as it does run well this should provide perfect transport over the months ahead.



**What:** 1999 Yamaha FZS600

**Price:** £650

**They say:** Starts and runs well, alarm, aftermarket shock, cosmetically challenged

**We say:** Deal with the issues (rust, cracks, etc) and this should run and run.



**YZF 750s make great winter hacks, just keep her sweet!**



## OR THE ALTERNATIVE...

On top of buying the bike, you'll have to tax it, MOT it, insure it and look after it. This all costs money. So rather than spending all that dosh on a bike, spend it on an experience. Get your bike out of the garage and send it abroad – with you following closely after it. Foreign trackdays are a steal. No Limits are doing Cartagena for three days in January for £409. Add a flight, meals, fuel and rubber and you're spending about what you would on a winter hack. Now all you have to do is work out how to get into work without a cheap bike doing all the hard work...

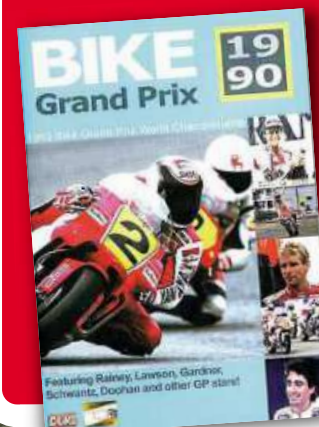
**Winter hack, or winter track thrash? Choices, choices...**





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# Riding



## THE CALIFORNIA SUPERBIKE SCHOOL

Founded by the legendary Keith Code in 1980, the California Superbike School offers a step-by-step method of technique oriented rider training in the art of cornering motorcycles. Over the past 30 years hundreds of thousands of students have improved their riding skills and cornering capabilities at CSS and their team of professional coaches are dedicated to your improvement.



*Set yourself up properly before the turn, then enjoy carving that corner!*

## SORTING BRAKING AND DOWNSHIFTING

Getting yourself set-up properly for a corner is the key to tackling it well. So how should you approach that turn?

WORDS: KEITH CODE PICS: CSS

**M**ost corners last only a few seconds, yet an entire universe of activity happens between the entry and the exit points. Enthusiastic cornering on a

motorcycle is chock full of actions and perceptions.

Surveying riders to discover what helps them best negotiate corners is part of my job. I've asked more than 10,000 riders,

"What holds your attention on corner approach?" An overwhelming majority answered, "entry speed." Successful setting of entry speed depends on where the rider places his attention well before arriving at the corner.

Watching other riders enter corners can reveal a lot. Start at the beginning; from the initial brake application to its release. Logic and experience tell us that the fewer distractions we have during those moments, the more accurately we will arrive at the proper entry speed. In my 1982 book 'A Twist of the Wrist' I provided illustrated and photographic descriptions of several key braking elements. Photos showed how to release the brake gradually as you lean the bike in to keep the chassis attitude as level as possible. Graphs showed the diminishing percentage of brake pressure used from straight up to leaned over. This has become known as 'trail braking'. It was the first time it was written and illustrated anywhere for motorcycle riders.

I also described and

illustrated how to use the front brake lever and throttle in combination so that braking and downshifting could be done together – melding them into one operation rather than several disconnected actions. While most racers were familiar with this technique, again, it was the first time anyone had showed or described it.

I mention these points because today, 30 years later, riders still have difficulty using this composite technique. Braking and downshifting is an especially active technique, which uses four out of the six controls of the bike simultaneously. Good coordination in each part is imperative in executing it smoothly and accurately.

To describe it in sequence is simple enough; the brake is applied. Roughly halfway through the braking, the clutch is pulled in and the transmission is shifted down one gear. The rider then blips the gas (a rapid on/off twist of the grip) before releasing the clutch. Throughout this process, the rider also maintains or modulates front

*Dovi on day two of the lesson...*



CONTACT CSS TO BOOK: TEL 08700 671061 EMAIL [INFO@SUPERBIKESCHOOL.CO.UK](mailto:INFO@SUPERBIKESCHOOL.CO.UK) WEB [WWW.SUPERBIKESCHOOL.CO.UK](http://WWW.SUPERBIKESCHOOL.CO.UK)





Got a riding question - either on the track or on the road? Want the CSS team to help? Just drop us a line and we'll get it answered for you. [letters@fastbikesmag.com](mailto:letters@fastbikesmag.com)

## STEERING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

**Q** I've heard a lot about counter steering, but what benefits can I get if I am able to do this properly?

**Tony, email**

**A** There's an awful lot of information on the internet about the physics involved with counter steering and why it works, but unless we are interested in that aspect all we need to know is that in order to turn the bike to the right, we press on the right bar. To turn left, we press on the left bar. It's possible to crash a bike by turning it if there's something else going on at the same time (such as cold tyres, turning with the brakes on, badly set or worn out suspension), but the act of simply turning the bike hasn't yet resulted in a crash.

If we can steer the bike quicker than we currently do, we can start to use it to our advantage. The sooner we get the bike onto our line, the earlier in the turn we can get it stable with good throttle control. We also use less lean angle through the turn compared to someone

who steers the bike slowly. This can be done even in wet conditions; we don't want to turn the bike to a steep lean angle, but we can still reap the benefits of good throttle control early in the turn.

To steer the bike quicker we press the bar harder, and we need to press until we have the bike facing where we want it to go, then we can stop pressing the bar. It's important not to begin good throttle control until after we finish steering the bike, as adding lean angle and throttle is a very common cause of crashing.

If we can turn the bike quickly, and we are faced with the situation where a car begins to pull out from a side road into our path, then if we can see the situation developing and are able to turn the bike quickly we have a good chance of avoiding the collision.

There are no circumstances when you wouldn't want to turn the bike as quickly as possible, as long as it's appropriate to the turn with the conditions.

If a rider knows he can steer a



Counter steering works on any bike. It's a fundamental principle!

bike and get round the turn, he will not feel that he is going too fast on the way into the turn. Have you ever gone into a turn and suddenly thought, "I'm going too fast"? What you doubted was that you can steer the bike round the turn. So, if you think about it, your turn entry speed is directly related to how well you can steer a bike. It's a skill well worth learning and practicing.



## ASK AN EXPERT

ALL THE CSS COACHES HAVE SPENT YEARS HONING THEIR RIDING, AND ARE PERFECTLY PLACED TO ANSWER YOUR RIDING QUESTIONS. SO DON'T BE SHY, ASK GARY ADSHEAD HERE!

brake lever pressure to achieve the degree of braking necessary for the desired corner entry speed.


Using this technique, it takes less than half a second to execute a one-gear downshift. And just so it is clear, the throttle blip is done so that the engine revs match the bike's speed once the clutch is released, making a smooth transition to that next gear down. You're the human slipper clutch.

What goes wrong? Commonly, I see riders pulling on the brake, pulling the clutch in, shifting down, and then slowly releasing the clutch. This can take two seconds - or more. And that's not all. There are a number of incorrect variations; over-revving the engine when the throttle is blipped, releasing the clutch lever too early and making the bike surge forward, letting the clutch out too late and losing the engine rpm needed, blipping the throttle before the clutch is disengaged causing a surge, and so on. There are many opportunities for mis-coordination.

Fast, efficient downshifts while braking allow the rider more time to see, feel and accurately track his changing speed. Attention is on tracking the decreasing speed rather than on what the bike is doing. Getting it wrong, as described above, creates distractions that take up and break up our attention.



Shifting and braking are simple to master and offer big rewards...

Comments like, "I have a slipper clutch to handle that," or, "I don't see the need for it," or, "Tried it but I can't get it smoothly," are all just excuses. Until your bike revs itself for perfectly smooth downshifts like MotoGP bikes and Formula 1 cars are programmed to do, you are wasting precious time and likely failing to set your entry speed perfectly. The information has been out there for 30 years. Isn't it about time you took a day to master it? I guarantee a terrific sense of accomplishment once you have it dialled. 

## SHAKY CHICANES?

**Q** Why does my bike shake in the middle of chicanes?  
**Glenn, Co Antrim**

**A** The bike will shake because we go from a position where we are locked onto the bike, then we go to a position where we are not locked on, then we are locked on in the second part of the chicane when we are on the opposite side of the bike.

The bike shakes because at the point where we are in the middle and not locked on, we use the bars to pull ourselves across the bike - and this causes the instability.

If we can remain locked onto the bike all the way through the chicane, it will remain stable throughout. We can do this using the outside leg to sweep our hips across the bike so that our inside knee comes into contact with the tank (like the Newton's Cradle, where one ball bearing hits the suspended line, and the ball bearing at the opposite side swings out). This means we will have both knees on the tank at the middle part of the chicane, thus meaning we will not use the handlebars to pull ourselves across the bike. When we are across the bike we can then relax what is now our inside knee. This will keep us stable on the bike, and give us a stable motorcycle during our transition from one side of the bike to the other.



Get locked into the bike and banish those shakes



# Technical



Your chain doesn't have to be goldie lookin'...



## JHS RACING OWNER/BIG CHEESE

James Holland runs JHS Racing in Keynsham, and he is our go to guy whenever we need a bike looking at. JHS Racing was set up in the mid 1990s and has since expanded as its reputation has grown. The workshop deals with everything, from scooters to superbikes. Having built and worked on race Suzuki SVs and Triumph 675s James has a wealth of knowledge with these bikes, but elsewhere James' knowledge is as extensive as it gets. So from tyre fitting to MOTs, from dyno work to suspension, James really does do it all. And here he is, passing on his years in the business to Fast Bikes readers!



## Know Your Drivetrain: Chain And Sprockets

It doesn't matter how much power your bike makes if you can't get it to your rear wheel properly - via the chain...

Let's start with the basics. There are various different sizes and pitches. Generally, the chain size will increase depending on the cubic capacity of the machine. Thankfully, chain technology has moved on massively compared to what it was like back in the 1980s, when chains were the size of houses. They were massive

great, heavy-duty things - but funnily enough they weren't very strong and had a nasty habit of snapping at inappropriate times.

Nowadays, if you take a 1,000cc bike, 99 per cent of them use a 530 chain, which is a metric sizing. 600s generally have a 525 chain, smaller bikes might have a 520, and right down to 125s that wear a 428 pitch chain. MotoGP

bikes now have tiny chains, purely because of weight and drag. If you can replace them every session, then why not?

We get trackday customers coming in and asking for a 520 conversion. If you take the weight of a 530 chain and the weight of a 520 chain, the 520 is obviously lighter because there's less material on it. If you have a lighter chain, there's less drag involved as it slides over the sprocket, so that requires less input. That means your engine's output can be utilised to a better extent rather than being absorbed by that chain. A ton of feathers is still a ton of feathers after all!

We've used a 525 chain on 520 sprockets and it's perfectly safe. It's not an ideal situation, but if you have to get yourself home, needs must. The only difference is that chain will move from side to side, so can cause excessive sprocket wear. It's not something that I'd recommend as a full time

Could eat your dinner off that...



CONTACT JHS RACING: TEL 0117 986 8844 EMAIL [JHSRACING@LINEONE.NET](mailto:JHSRACING@LINEONE.NET) WEB [WWW.JHSRACING.CO.UK](http://WWW.JHSRACING.CO.UK)





solution for obvious reasons.

Do you want an interesting chain-based fact? All of them (the decent ones anyway) are made in Japan, even the Italian brands. Afam is a French company but the chains are made in Japan.

Chain manufacturers now have all sorts of types. There'll be a standard chain, heavy-duty, x-ring, o-ring, for example. The x and o-rings sit between the two outer plates, with the pin passing through the rivet, and they're there to stop the muck getting in. When you lube a chain, it's always best to do it after a ride when the chain is hot – metal expands and allows the lubricant to get inside. There's no point in lubricating the outside of the chain, as all that'll do is just cover the external components.

It's all to do with the amount of friction across the plate. With an x-ring, you have four points, but they're like knife-edges instead of one big point, which causes more friction. There's a misconception that you shouldn't clean o-ring chains with petrol or any other chemicals, but that's all down to the old four star gasoline that could damage the rubber.

There are different types of links. There's a split link, which has a little spring clip and isn't recommended for any bike other than motocrossers and lawnmowers, and anything else where the chains don't last more than two minutes. I've seen them

used on race bikes by lazy people and they're on a hiding to nothing. It's simply dangerous.

You don't really see bikes throwing chains off anymore and that's largely down to the introduction of soft links, where you'll need a special tool in order to spread the end of the pin to stop the end plate coming off.

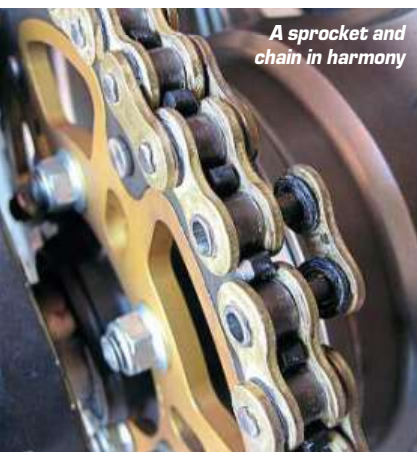
Sprockets. Again, 99 per cent of manufacturers supply their machines with a steel sprocket. They do that for a number of reasons; one is the cost of materials, and two is the longevity of materials (the firms have no idea what that bike will be used for, with some commuting on Gixers and R1s and others racing them).

As a rule of thumb, front sprockets come with a rubber buffer in the centre. That rubber buffer does two things. The first job is to take the shock load out when dropping the clutch, as everything moves and the chain will be pulled into the sprocket, which could cause internal gearbox damage. The second is also a good indicator of how worn your chain and sprockets are, because that rubber buffer will start to show deep lines of where the links are rubbing.

Signs of wear? Hooking is where the sprocket base has been elongated so the chain roller doesn't fit properly, they're two mismatched sizes and shapes, so the chain is trying to rip itself out of the sprocket. You have to bear in mind that the 150bhp your bike is spitting out is only going through half that sprocket at any one moment in time.

We've got a customer with a ZX-14R running the original sprockets, and he's done 32,000 miles on them, purely because he looks after them. He cares for it, lubes the chain, cleans it properly. And yet we see other customers who struggle to get 3,000 miles out of standard OEM set-ups.

As much of a ball ache as it is, removing the front sprocket cover regularly to give it a proper clean could save you hundreds of pounds in the long run. It's the winter



## PROPER TOOLS

### ESSENTIAL WORKSHOP KIT



#### Snap-On 'Lock 'n' Roll' tool cab

■ This is a seven-drawer tool cab from Snap-On and it's unbelievable value at £1,500. You may laugh, but it really is. It comes with a 8-piece screwdriver kit and a ratchet, 8-19mm six-sided spanner set, six-sided shallow 3/8 sockets, 4-piece plier and cutter set, a 24oz hammer, and an insert bit set. It carries all we need for basic stuff and rolls round the workshop like a beauty!

months that kill stuff. Buying chain lube with your wallet rather than your brain also can have a detrimental effect – buying the cheapest stuff you can get your hands on, like fancy-sounding waxes, is also a common concern. The advent of water, and what water brings with it like gravel from the road, sticks to the chain (and the wax) and subsequently you'll get a grinding paste. You could wipe it off and use it as a valve-lapping compound.

Race teams don't tend to use lubrication because the chain is constantly fettled and racetracks don't emit the same detritus like you see on the roads. Maybe they'll use WD-40 to supply a thin film of protection as a token gesture to keep things going under high frictions rates, but that chain will probably never see 1,000 miles before it's binned.

One of the biggest issues we have with front sprockets is getting the nut off. The days of sitting astride the bike, putting it in gear, hitting the back brake and getting a mate with a massive bar to undo the nut are very much gone. Sooner or later,

you are going to break a gearbox by putting unwanted force through those gears. Most gearbox sprocket nuts are over 190lb/ft of torque, which is a lot, and most bikes have to have their engines out to reach the gearboxes. Some people turn their noses up at battery-powered guns. They think it's a bit cowboy using a high-impact puppy, but it's the massive breaker bar that's cowboy.

Adjustment. Having the chain too tight means that when the suspension goes through its stroke, the rollers are going to be pulled into the sprocket. When the bike is static, the chain may feel OK, but will obviously get tighter when loaded. Worst-case scenario? It could rip out the gearbox bearing.

That could still happen when the chain is too loose, because a chain never runs in a straight line, it moves in waves. As well as wear, you're increasing the chance of the chain being thrown off the sprockets. You may be lucky and the chain falls off without harm. You could be unlucky, and the chain falls off, wraps around the front sprocket, smashes your crankcases and severs your foot. Always refer back to the owner's manual...



If you don't know the difference between yokes and yolks, Dzus and Zeus, or suspension and suspenders – email the experts [letters@fastbikes.com](mailto:letters@fastbikes.com)



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# Legal

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ANDREW DALTON

## PENAL SERVITUDE PREVENTOR

The Fast Bikes Legal Clinic is compiled by Andrew Dalton, and his bike riding barristers and solicitors at White Dalton Motorcycle Solicitors.

They deal with personal injury claims and their sister company, Motor Defence Team, deals with all the motoring offences. They know everything about bike law. Andrew is a former London motorbike courier turned barrister and solicitor, and we know he's good. All the White Dalton lawyers are qualified barristers, or solicitors, or both - and they all have full bike licences, too. They don't act for insurance companies or the prosecution. They are Britain's most specialist law practice, and if they don't know the answer to your question, there probably isn't one. Don't rely on the advice from your insurance appointed solicitor, get proper independent advice.

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Are you a legal guardian to more than your offspring?

## Scrap Happy? Not Likely...

Do your son a favour, and then look what happens...

**Q** My son, as a 16 year old, used to have a scooter which was registered in my name for insurance reasons - and also because my son is a bit of a nudity who won't deal with any paperwork. As soon as he passed his driving test, he left his scooter outside our house where it has slowly but surely deteriorated. He had it under a tarpaulin cover, and after two and a half years of not being used, I got a mate in the motorcycle trade to look it over. He said it was only worth its scrap weight, which was not a lot. I had organised for a scrap man to come and take the bike away, and ready for the scrap man to take the bike away, I took the cover off it. I then had my door knocked on by a PASCO, who very officiously told me I was committing about 200 different road traffic offences, and when I tried to explain that the bike was about to go for scrap, it had not moved in two and a half years, the brakes were seized on, all the petrol had evaporated in the tank, the battery was as dead as a door nail, and both tyres were flat, so the bike clearly was not going anywhere, she

still told me that the vehicle was a motor vehicle and it was covered by the Road Traffic Act 1988 and as such it needed to be insured, Mort's and not dangerous.

I have now been summoned to Court for the offences of failure to tax and failure to insure - but nothing about keeping a dangerous vehicle on the road. These offences could, quite probably, cost me my job. I drive all day for a living, and I have had a clean driving licence for 26 years. I am now told to expect between six and eight points for the insurance offence, along with a fine for not having the vehicle taxed. Nobody seems that bothered about the MOT.

Apart from arranging to have my son shot, or at least beaten up, is there anything I can do?

**Name withheld**

**A** As a matter of law, the prosecution is right. The law on this point has evolved over the years, but the Magistrates Court are bound to follow a High Court authority which is very similar to your case. If a vehicle is on the road it must have MOT, tax and insurance. If you had

*pushed the vehicle on to your drive you would have been committing no criminal offence. Because you are the registered keeper, it is your duty to keep the vehicle insured. You put the vehicle into your own name because you knew your son would not be bothered to tax or insure it so you wanted the reminder to come to you. Unfortunately, the Magistrates are bound to follow the law, and once they follow the law, they are bound to impose the mandatory punishment of at least six points. The fact that you have got yourself into this position by your son leaving a bike registered in your name out on the highway to rot, does not really help you. The entire band of punishment goes from the minimum six points, which is where I think you are going to be, to a possible 12 months disqualification. Not good for you. If, as I expect, the Magistrates will be merciful, because they can see this has happened by oversight and with no real criminal intent, I suspect you are on for six points and a relatively modest fine, but I cannot give you any better news.*



# Chatter

## ↓ STAR LETTER

### SPOTY, NOT SBOTY

No, that's not a spelling error, it's that crap BBC programme that brown noses so called sports stars and LASTS FOR BLOODY AGES! I am sick of people like Zara Phillips winning an award voted for by people whose only knowledge of sport is from the six o'clock news. I think it's time that we have a winner who has overcome adversity, worked hard for every bit of success and is a shining example that our kids can really look up to. My nomination this year will be Ian Hutchinson. Got to be the greatest come back ever. 30-odd operations to save his leg, he had to learn to ride a heavily modified bike and what a save off the kerb when his bike was running out of fuel. A real down to earth sporting hero.

Matt, Surrey

## WIN OXFORD

A pair of awesome new Oxford RP-4 gloves - worth £39.99 - for writing the Star Letter!

Cowhide upper with synthetic suede Aniline goatskin palm - Silicone grip fingers - Pre curved wrist, fingers and palm - External seam construction Anti abrasion Aramid lining Carbon fibre knuckle and finger guards - Moulded TPR retention strap Impact-absorbing padding. Available in S-2XL sizes.



Hutchy, aka Superman

We'll add Hutchy to a massive list of deserving characters - Danny Kent, John McGuinness, Jonathan Rea, Alastair Fagan...



WORTH £39.99!



## kiddi moto

### KID'S CORNER

My two year old daughter appears to be sharing her father's love for bikes. We were at a county show a few weeks ago and Laguna Motorcycles had a stand and straight away my daughter wanted to sit on the Ducati Panigale 899. So now I'm now trying to convince the wife to let me buy one, for the sake of my daughter, of course!

Jonathan Valden



### PEAK PRACTICE

Just thought I'd show you a few pics taking advantage of some dry weather with a ride around the Woodhead Pass, Derwent Valley and Snake Pass.

Dan Wilde



### SELFIE CENTRAL

We stopped for a selfie at Locheanhead and I told the wife not to touch the red button. Did she listen! Excuse the helmet nipple hair. Love the mag keep up the good work.

Mark and Sharon Macdonald  
Fife, Scotland

## AS SEEN ON TWITTER



@team\_nohope

5 years since our first race @fastbikesmag #NoBudgetCup @angleseycircuit still going strong

@Readom Marquez

@fastbikesmag best thing this weekend purchasing a Austin Racing exhaust on the Bay for less than half price only 3 months old #bargain.



@finnoctane

10 days in Europe watching my mate play with his 675R (dream bike) and I come home to this! Fuck you @fastbikesmag



@gorman\_o

Casey pressuring the leaders in the final at Assen strong podium two weeks after braking his shoulder @fastbikesmag



@JMRX

@fastbikesmag doesn't get any better than this; sun, pool, good read. Only thing missing is a afternoon trackday!!



### R YOU SERIOUS?

Such a nice bike and awesome sound!  
Denis Latham





Want your greatest riding cock-up, triumph, or just the missus' naked form immortalised in these hallowed pages? Email [letters@fastbikesmag.com](mailto:letters@fastbikesmag.com)

## KEEP 'EM PEELED

Bike theft in the UK is on the rise – and in some places, dramatically. I live and work in South Yorkshire (someone has too) and I won't directly say what my job is, but people that break the law don't like me or my uniform. I'm a member of several bike enthusiast pages on social media – including pages that advertise stolen bikes in my local area. After seeing pictures on Facebook on these pages of the stolen bikes, I dug a little further (not in a professional manner) into the profiles of the people that had had their bike stolen. It amazes me what people put on their profiles.

I'll use an example of a recent one; a biker who actually lives around the corner from me put his bike on a page to advertise it was stolen. I clicked on his profile and boom! Name, home town, job, personal info galore and pictures of his bike! With this info I typed it into a free online directory to which three people came up in that area with the same name but different addresses, so I put all three address in Google maps street view until I found the house that was in his pictures on his profile!

So after 10 minutes work, I had his full name, full address, photos of his front door and even an aerial view of his house so I can plan my route once I have his bike! There are (trust me) bike thieves that steal to order, and the bike is probably out the country before you have even realised it has been taken. These people don't need much info. Anyone of us can do what I did but don't forget that these are professionals and will have a lot more resources than social media. So check your security settings now!

**Dean, South Yorkshire**

*Wise words, Dean. And there we were thinking that all there was on t'internet was porn and cat videos...*



At least the nails are clean...

## DRILLER KILLER

I've been reading your mag for a while now, and as of yet have never sent a letter. But, alas, I feel like I should mention my recent unfortunate accident. I stupidly decided to drill a 14mm bit through my left hand (I know, my bloody clutch hand). To cut a very long story short, I've had surgery on it and have had to cancel my fourth, and most anticipated, trackday (my previous three were at Three Sisters – a very nice short and twisty track) on my beautiful first generation Aprilia RSV Mille. So I'm not a happy



chappy, and to top it all off my mate who I was taking to the trackday has shown total support and friendship to ask to borrow my van – git!

**Shaun O'Connor**

*Oooph, that looks like it would have smarted. At least it wasn't a hole cutter on it...*

## NOT OK COMMUTER

Well I rode in this morning for a change and it was on nice day, but it reminded me why bikes are for fun and speed and not commuting. Yes, my normal 30-minute journey only took 15 minutes, however the sunshine turned to unforecasted fog. Traffic was horrendous and it was cold. Bikes are for weekends end of story. If it ain't for a thrash leave it in the garage.

**Justin Krebs**

*The problem there is that you either work or live in the wrong place!*



AS SEEN ON  
FACEBOOK

**Fast Bikes Magazine:** Anyone who's at Oulton this weekend should give Chris Walker a special wave for his 300th race. Legend! Favourite Walker moment?

**Clive Littlewood:** My fave Walker moment was his Dad telling him off in his motorbike shop in Mapperley, Nottingham for not cleaning his crosser after a weekend's riding!

**David Johnston:** Legend! Best BSB rider to not win the championship! (Yet!) Loved his incredible win at a rain soaked Assen in WSBK!

**Steve Crossley:** Taking Hodgson out at Abbey, Silverstone, during that controversial 2000 season. The championship should have been his!

**Chris Withey:** Seeing 'Bogbrush' for the first time. Skinny kid on a KX80 absolutely wasted everyone in the 125cc expert class back in 84.

**Mike Bennett:** Brands Hatch, back in the Stone Ages, Chris on a 250 into Druids, his knee popping in and out as found his line and braking point. We knew he was pretty special then.

**Owen Lewis:** 1999 Mallory Park – watching at the entrance to Gerrards (before they put in the chicane mid corner) and seeing the sheer commitment as he barely seemed to touch the brakes on the corner entry, just clicking down a gear and sticking the ZX-7RR on its side going into the bend!

**Richard Ward:** One of his first Yamaha Cadbury Boost rides when he literally flew down Cascades above the bike as he high sided!



Old, but gold!

**Mark Farr:** Memories of BSB and World Superbikes, fantastic rider, one of the many riders that was always going to give it his all, I now live in OZ but have the great memories!

**David Billington:** I was there yesterday for practice, he looked good, still a very quick and busy rider.

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# Travel & Tracks

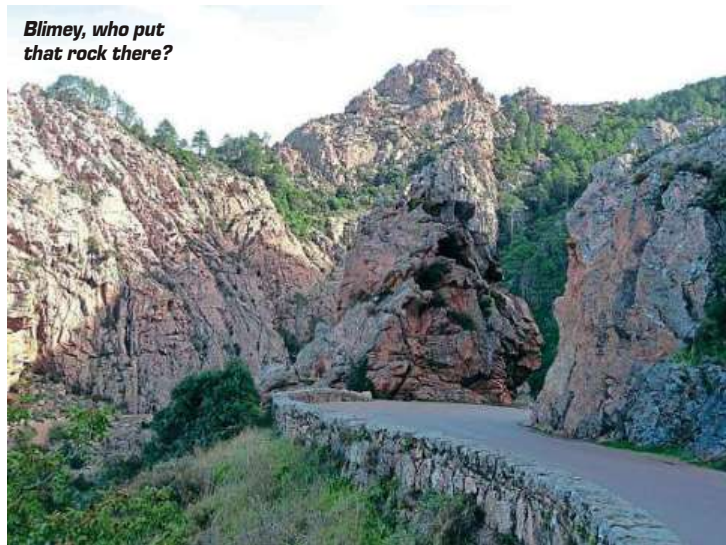
## POSTCARD FROM: CORSICA

I'm amazed that no-one has written in extolling the virtues of Corsica yet. I've been going with my wife on and off for the best part of 20 years, and it's still some of the best riding I've ever done in Europe. It's quiet, the roads are mostly well surfaced, the landscape is dramatic and being on an island gives it a truly adventurous vibe. The whole of Corsica has something to offer, but if you had to pin me down I'd say that the D55 and D155 from Ajaccio down towards Propiano is my favourite. This, and a few others, is used in car adverts and is laden with turns. The surface gets a bit iffy in places, but by and large it's a cracker. Mind you, I'm saying this from the perspective of my KTM SM-T, and there's a good reason why I don't take my R1 on these trips – and that's getting there. We take the ferry from Genoa, which in itself is a slog to get to. It's tempting to stay on the mainland too because the roads are terrific around here. But the expense and effort of getting to Corsica are well worth it – I'd suggest giving it a go, guys!

Phil Castle, Winchester

*If the roads are anything like Sardinia, we're in!*

*Blimey, who put that rock there?*



*Yup, that works...*



### WIN

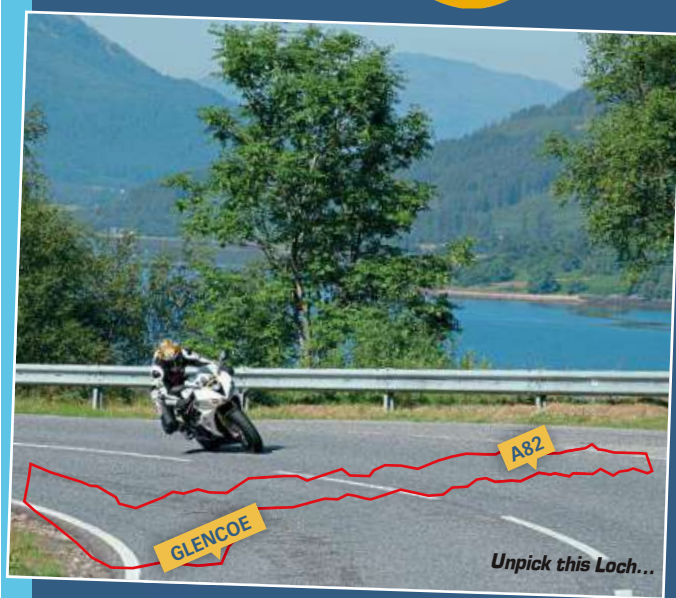
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## Kriega

**WORTH £145!**



## WORTH GETTING UP FOR: B863 LOCH LEVEN

**To get the best of any road, it's worth setting the alarm. No cops, hardly any traffic and a brew at the end of a run all make the sacrifice worth it...**

It obviously depends where you start from, but for most of us this road will require a fairly obscene alarm call, but worry not because this is one hell of a ride. You can't get lost on it, either, because so long as you keep Loch Leven on the same side you'll just get back to where you started from. Some of the route is on the A82, and this bit around Glencoe will probably see you mix it with a lot of the tourists, but the B863 sees much less traffic, meaning that it's perfect for a play. This isn't hairpin territory, rather quick straights blended with

fast corners. Some of the surfaces leave a little to be desired, but so long as you keep your wits about you there should be more than enough grip to keep you satisfied. At one end of the Loch is Kinlochleven, which means 'end of the scratching section' in Gallic, so take it steady here before tackling the other side of the Loch in a similarly spirited manner. There are a few houses dotted along the northern shore, so watch out for any cars coming out of drives and the like, otherwise do one lap for fun and the other to enjoy the view. 20 miles of awesomeness with plenty of other roads in the area. But here's a tip. Keep this one in your pocket until the good weather strikes, the weather likes to show its worst side here – especially in winter...



## GRIP ADVISOR: RESPONDING UNDER PRESSURE

Not setting your pressures up before going on track – or even riding on the road – is a fundamental mistake that many riders make. Whether it's through ignorance or laziness, going out over or under inflated is a no-no that is so easily rectified. There is another reason for mal-adjusted pressures, and that could be because your pressure gauge is up the spout – so once you've set your pressures, wander over to a tyre man on track (or use another gauge) to ensure that your tool is calibrated correctly. So what pressures should you use on track? The best answer to this is to check with the manufacturer. All have details on their websites, and should be your first port of call. Don't just prick your ears up at 32psi, because when we ran our big tyre test two years ago, recommended cold track pressures went from as little as 17psi (Dunlop GP Racer 211s) to 42psi (Dunlop SportSmarts). Too much pressure – road pressures – will see cold tear become an issue, a harsher ride and a reduction in the tyre's contact patch. Too little pressure and the tyre will deform too much, get too hot, upset handling, slow steering and speed up wear rates. And remember that ambient temperatures have an affect too, with ten degrees in temperature change causing a 1psi pressure change.

So don't be lazy or ignorant – check pressures before you go out on track or off for a blast to get the very best from your rubber.



Get it measured!

## RACING DATES

THERE'S LIFE IN THE SEASON YET,  
SO GET YOURSELF IN THE STANDS!

### MOTOGP

- ➔ 11th October – Motegi
- ➔ 18th October – Phillip Island
- ➔ 25th October – Malaysia
- ➔ 8th November – Valencia

### WSB

- ➔ 18th October – Qatar

### BSB

- ➔ 18th October – Brands Hatch

### THE REST

- ➔ 18th October – Thundersport – Cadwell Park
- ➔ 18th October – Endurance Legends Race – Snetterton
- ➔ 24th October – Auto66 – Cadwell Park
- ➔ 25th October – BMCRC – Snetterton

"Thanks for coming!"



## SORTING SUSPENSION SET-UP: COMPRESSION DAMPING

The first thing your bike's suspension does when it hits a bump is compress. If there were no damping in your forks or shock you can imagine that life may be a little jarring, so compression damping is used to resist bumps being transmitted directly through to the rider. We're also talking about the forces transferred when you start braking. Hit the anchors and weight transfers forward. So compression damping essentially changes the speed at which the fork or shock is allowed to travel upwards relative to the chassis. But why is this important? Well, if that speed is too fast then this poorly controlled motion will lead to the suspension bottoming out – and you not half feeling it. With the forks at the

bottom of their stroke, any new undulations have to be absorbed by the tyre, and they're not always in great place to do that. Too slow and the bike won't react to the new conditions that it's facing having travelled beyond that initial bump or pull on the brakes. When you brake, the bike's geometry changes and helps the machine to turn, so if your compression is too slow (aka too stiff) then you won't feel the love heading into a corner and your apex may be sacrificed. At the rear, when you apply power weight shifts to the back of the machine. Soft compression damping means the front wheel won't be weighted enough to steer, too slow and stiff and you'll start to have grip problems. Get it sorted!



Get on your knees and fiddle!

## TRACK LIFE: INSURANCE ABROAD

It's that time of the year when many of you lucky lot start thinking about riding on track in foreign climes. But what do you do about insurance on an event? If the event is in Europe, then you should be thinking of upgrading well above what an EHIC card can offer. There are a few companies offering cover for track riders, like ExtremePlus and Four Counties, the former who can offer medical and repatriation cover for just under £50. Some trackday firms want to see this cover before letting you out on track, while smaller events will see the circuits themselves sell cover – although this is likely to be written in foreign, so best off taking a UK-based policy ahead of this...

### TOP 5 TRACKDAYS

There's still time to go out and play!

- ➔ 14th October – Donington Park – £199 – No Limits  
A ladies only training day with Dame Maria Costello.
- ➔ 20th October – Snetterton – £99 – MSV  
An open pitlane event – go nuts, fill it and rip it!
- ➔ 24th October – Rockingham – £99 – No Limits  
Rockingham's a rubbish track, right? Er, wrong.
- ➔ 29th October – Portimao – £535 – Focused Events  
Four days on track at our super SBOTY venue
- ➔ 7th November – Jerez – £679 – Track Sense  
Three days on MotoGP's sacred Tarmac! Sherry, anyone?



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Not sure how that's going to work...

## ROOTSY YAMAHA YZF-R1

TIME ON TEST:  
5 MONTHS

01531

ODOMETER  
MILES

BHP: 175  
GAIN: 0

NEXT AIM:  
RECOVER

THIS MONTH I HAVE MOSTLY BEEN... "Preparing for the next 3,000 miles..."

**P**iss poor preparation prevents perfect performance, as they say, so this month I've been busy trying to sort everything out before the R1 is sent on a 3,000 mile march around Europe. Yup, this is the steed I'll be on for the Cannonball Race, sorry, I mean Rally, I mean Run, and I really can't wait. True, I'm sure something with a big padded seat, heated plum holder and some banging tunes would be the perfect way to get me to the rendezvous point near Vienna in Austria in style, but for every mile after that it would be just torture knowing that I'd left this baby behind.

Tyres, luggage and location are my prime concerns. Though they've barely been scrubbed in, I know the Pirelli Supercorras won't be much use at the end of the journey – so the tricky choice of rubber has to be ruminated over. The Cannonball organisers have chucked a trackday in during the middle of the event, so it's not just a case of sticking some touring rubber on and hoping for the best. I need tyres that will cope with the 1,000 mile trip to the startline (I'm less bothered about getting it back), that will be up for scything through some of the best roads in Europe and then be able to made me look like a riding God in front of all my new Cannonball friends. Choosing such rubber is no easy task...

I plumped for the Dunlop Sportsmart IIs in the end, mainly because I've done lots of the above on these tyres. I've

been on track with them, stuck a few thousand miles on them and had a blast on the road with them, so here's hoping for more of that action in the week ahead. Charlie took the Dunnies to Phoenix Motorcycles to get fitted, and for that I will be forever in debt, to both Phoenix and Charles 'Charlie' Charles.

Regarding luggage, I'm normally only ever away for a night or two, but the Cannonball trip lasts for over a week, so I'm going to need a bit more in the way of space for my shizzle. I turned to Charlie again, for he is the font of all knowledge when it comes to luggage. With a few options available, I plumped for the sheer usability of some Givi gear that he squirreled away from previous blags. The Squirrelled Run does provide a van to haul your luggage from one hotel to the next, but I need a tankbag at the very least on a daily basis, and Givi's Tanklock system seems just the ticket. A tailpack and a rucksack, and that's it. I might buy some disposable pants and socks, so for each day into the event I lose more stuff. In short, not many people are going to want to know me after 10 hard days on the road...


Finally, I need to know where I'm going, and that's why I've plugged in a TomTom Rider 400 into the bike. To be honest, I prefer the display and usability of a Garmin, but preferring any port in a storm I've fitted the TomTom.

It's probably not enough, but that's all



**Price from new:** £14,999  
**Insurance group:** 17

Modifications	Price
GB Racing protection	£173.11
Akrapovic exhaust	£669.99
Endurance screen	£101.99
Brake lever	£159.99
Clutch lever	£159.99
Rearsets	£599.99
<b>RUNNING TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,865.06</b>

I've got time to do. It's going to be a big undertaking, made more trying for the lack of movement in the left hand. It's been OK on the run in and out of work every day, but this is going to seriously increase the strain on it – not least because I'll be on the bike for the best part of a day just to get to the startline. It's going to be tough on man and machine, and I fear for the R1 that it'll be the mass of flesh on top that'll slow it down. If I get back I'll tell you about it! 

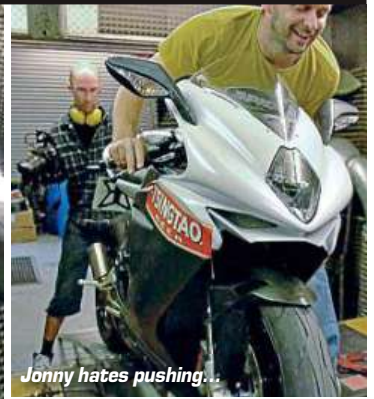
### Thanks to:

Dunlop: [www.dunlop.eu](http://www.dunlop.eu)  
Phoenix Motorcycles:  
[www.phoenixmotorcycles.co.uk](http://www.phoenixmotorcycles.co.uk)  
Cannonball Run:  
[www.cannonballbikerun.com](http://www.cannonballbikerun.com)





She's got some go!



Jonny hates pushing...



Let fiddling commence!



## BENJAMIN MV AGUSTA F3 800

TIME ON TEST:  
3 MONTHS

00784 ODOMETER  
MILES

BHP: 135  
GAIN: 9

NEXT AIM:  
More bits!

THIS MONTH I HAVE MOSTLY BEEN... "Riding the F3 in the rain. A crime!"

What a stonking couple of months for the F3 800 it's been. In the last issue, if you weren't already aware, the MV Hampshire Tsingtao BSB squad threw a stack of bits at her, a list of which you can see on the right of this page. Included in that was an SC Project can and a Power Commander V with a Secondary Fuel Module to back it up.

This month I managed to get it on the JHS dyno. The results are in, and I'm very happy to report they are terrific. From an initial base reading of 125bhp, we're now just short of 134bhp at the rear wheel, which is a great increase in power.

It's quite tricky to get significant gains out of modern bikes these days, for all sorts of reasons mostly to do with electronics and the standard ECU firmware. But James ran her up,

pronounced it good. After I thrashed it hard, I pronounce that he's not wrong.

The top end figures don't tell the whole story though, nor does the 2Nm of torque increase. Where the biggest difference lies is the gains across the whole range. Specifically, between 4 to 6,000rpm, and also 10 to 13,000rpm in the bhp stakes sees a massive improvement. And the torque curve is improved along the entire line. It's all very palpable on a ride, the extra grunt now lifts the stupidly light front end even easier in the first couple of gears, and the extra top-end rush gives the F3 a killer edge. And let's not forget, that it now makes just a couple of gee gees less than a 2002 Yamaha R1!

But my favourite part of MV Hampshire's work with this is how more usable the throttle is at lower revs. I bemoaned the fact it couldn't hold a steady throttle at 20mph in anything above second gear before – but now it can. It's also made pulling away far easier too, and overall the throttle, while still very much an MV one, has a more sophisticated feel to its delivery at all revolutions. I couldn't be happier with it, though I'm told even more improvements will be made in future.

I'm very much liking the Accossato levers and grips, too. Both the brake and clutch has a lovely, natural feel to them as you stroke them into action. That may sound trite, but I've tried plenty of aftermarket levers that feel bloody awful, proving that it's a science all to itself to get them just right.

Another modification I forgot to mention was replacing the tyres. The Bridgestone R10's were unbelievably epic the entire time they were on, but as I'd razed them to death it was time for something new. So, a brand new pair of R10s are now on! And once I'm done with them, some Pirelli Supercorsas will

Price from new: £11,899

Insurance group: 16/17

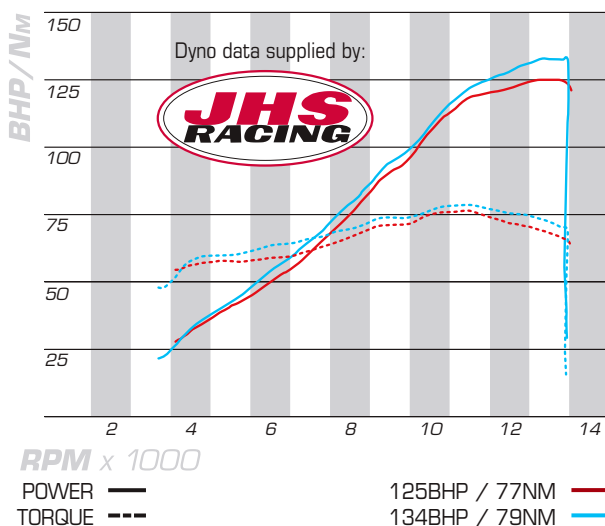
### Modifications

### Price

SC project slip-on	£432.00
PCV & Secondary Module	£640.00
Carbon hugger	£120.00
Carbon mudguard	£165.00
Carbon chain – guard	£120.00
Accossato clutch – perch	£149.99
Accossato levers	£79.98
Zero Gravity screen	£80.00
GB Racing covers	£140.00
Dyno time	£99.00
MWR air filter	£121.99
Eazi-Grip tank pads	£25.99
Bridgestone R10s	£250
<b>RUNNING TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,423.95</b>

Contact: [www.hampshiremvagusta.co.uk](http://www.hampshiremvagusta.co.uk)

### POWER AND TORQUE



be fitted, so I'll let you know how they and the F3 get on when the time comes.

Another mod' I forgot about was the Eazi-Grip tank grips. These are terrific, mostly because I'm lazy and often forget to brace with my knees when I hit the brakes hard. The F3 is such a lithe creature that it's easy to slip forwards sometimes, but these grips mean I barely have to expend any effort in this regard. A brilliant addition for only a few quid, no doubt. The one other addition that's got me some attention is the Tsingtao stickers, believe it or not. Filling up with fuel, some random bloke walking back to his car spotted them, sauntered up to me and said "Ere mate, I like their beer, too," then wandered off!

Right, time for some more riding methinks. And noisy riding, too, as the SC-P can sound fruity as you like. Lots more on the MV next month!







K5 power incoming!

## JONNY SUZUKI GSX-S1000F

TIME ON TEST:  
2 MONTHS

00893 ODOMETER  
MILES

BHP: 140  
GAIN: NA

NEXT AIM:  
SUZZIES?

THIS MONTH I HAVE MOSTLY BEEN... "Dreaming of ZX-10Rs, they're everywhere!"

Since I delivered the ZX-10R back without mishap a couple of months ago I've been making out that I grew emotionally attached to it, and that if I can't have that then I don't want anything, including food. There are two incontrovertible truths however; on our roads it's an instrument of torture for me, and BJ really wants me to take charge of this blue beauty.

In common with the ten-aargh, this 1000F also sports an emotional peg on which to hang a comfy cardigan of kinship – one that will be revealed in a future edition. Despite this, there is still something barring my acceptance of the big Suzuki into my life, but I'm not sure what that is so I'll get on with the triad of new-bike-ownership traditions; park it on the driveway so I can see it from inside the house, go for pointless rides just to ride it, and peruse the virtual catalogue of parts to modify it with.

Without trying to give the impression that I know anything about suspension, by the time I'd got used to piloting this particular bike around a Silverstone trackday I was starting to feel the vaguest of hints that its suspension may not epitomise the sportiest of set-ups. So, premature as it probably does seem, two boxes bearing the legend HyperPro have magically arrived. Exciting as that is, I'm in no hurry to get the contents thereof fitted until I've become more acquainted with the stock set-up and any adjustments that may or may not be available. At least that will give my pointless rides an aspect of 'research'.

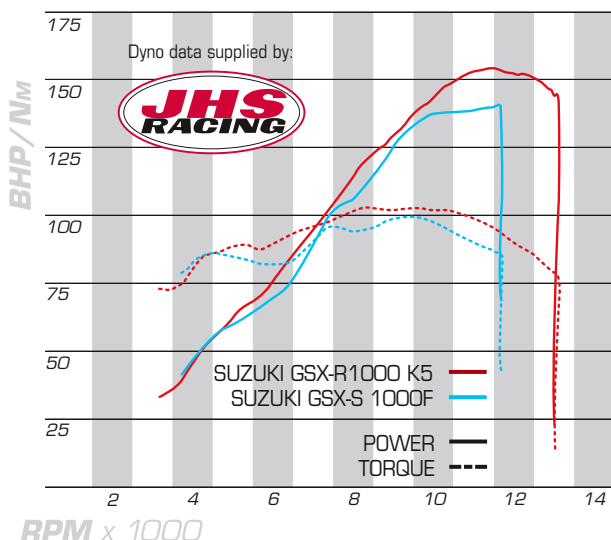
Even more exciting, and almost a guarantee of that elusive now-you-are-me feeling, is the thought of a Yoshimura can. As stock exhausts go, it scores well on the trinket-o-meter, but I almost can't wait to hear this one. A trip



Price from new:  
Insurance group: 15

£9,999

### POWER AND TORQUE



to our comparison dyno at JHS Racing reveals what makes the F's motor so entertaining for a perpetual novice such as me – the rush from 6,500rpm. The K5 engine on which it's based – apart from the obvious 'more power' – has a much straighter trace and I'm hoping that just fitting a different silencer won't change this too much. That the F nearly matches the K5 for torque from seven to ten thousand revolutions says to me that I'm not going to want more engine than this for a long time, and that I might even aspire to feeling the difference between the levels of traction-control on offer.

I found this version was very happy to rev, but I struggled to discern the slight kick up right at the top end. Now I know it's there I'll have a go at finding it – admittedly that's probably only going to happen if we end up on a track again though. For now, I'll be content with attempting to fit an aftermarket bauble or two, so it might seem more like my motorcycle and less like just a lump of transport, then maybe it'll find a space in my heart as well as my garage. **EB**



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Gripping stuff...

Charlie's attempt to stash his lid under the tank was a resounding failure...



Frame grips - a nice touch!



## CHARLIE TRIUMPH DAYTONA 675

TIME ON TEST:  
5 MONTHS

02898 ODOMETER  
MILES

BHP: 110  
GAIN: NA

NEXT AIM:  
TRIUMPH TREATS

THIS MONTH I HAVE MOSTLY BEEN... "Gaining grip, losing grip..."



To say I have done far too few miles on the 675 this month is a massive understatement. In fact it's almost criminal that I have only managed 170 miles. There are excuses, of course, and the runs that I have needed to do on the ZX-10R this month are very valid - as was the screw I discovered in the rear tyre that stopped any journeys I had planned on the 675. That included the hope I would get up to Triumph to get a few parts added from the Triumph catalogue, including a shifter and new Arrow exhaust.

As it was, I had a few jobs that have needed doing to the 675 that its lame condition would not hamper. As with most staff bikes that go through my hands, I look at them as if they are my own privately owned bike, meaning I mostly make changes that I would if it were the case. Thus I add solutions to my own riding foibles, one of the biggest being my 'tank-shagger' exploits of sliding forward at every given opportunity and being all out of shape on the bike. This particular problem's greatest disadvantage is in the corners when hanging off; the knee slipping on the offside can unsettle you badly.

So on a recent visit to Speedycom I was presented with a set of TechSpec Gripster Pads. There are three types, High Fusion, C3 and Snakeskin. I went for the latter as the Snakeskin is pretty thick which adds about centimetre to what is a pretty narrow tank, is obviously very durable and excellent quality. A drawback is that they are heavy, thus not the racer's choice, but thinner options are available in the range. Despite not riding any miles in anger the grip from my leather or denim jeans has improved my positioning on

the bike, and eased any fatigue in the arms and wrists with a stronger grip on the tank via the thighs. The TechSpec's have saved hours in front of the telly pounding away with the missus' Thigh Master... So all in all, these pads are a winner. They improve your ride, are stuck on with a reversible glue and, of course, protect the tank in areas of continual friction. Well worth a look.

Continuing on the protective theme was my second stick-on solution coming from R&G Racing. I have a tendency to continually rub my boots against the swingarm of most bikes I ride - and the 675 is no exception. There is already a scuffing showing on this staffer and I have always used frame protective plastic strips cut from larger sheets in the past to protect the frame. However, 'Eazi-Grip' from R&G not only comes pre cut but adds to the benefit of protecting the frame by providing a gripped surface to limit your foot's movement up again the frame and thus avoiding wear on your boots. Fitting is easy. Clean the frame with the alcohol wipe provided, warm the surface of the frame and the pad and simply peel off the backing and attach. Obviously the better equipped of us would have a heat gun on standby, a DeWalt, Milwaukee, a Black and Decker even... My choice, Revlon. There's a masculinity zapper right there.

So with all of the external add-ons I delved into the airbox too with the arrival of a Sprint Filter from Reactive Parts. On removal of the OE filter you could see where the concentration of the air is pushing the filtration system around, something that won't happen with Sprint Filters having an interwoven mesh around each channel. It will be interesting to see how this new filter



Price from new: £9,599  
Insurance group: 15

Modifications	Price
Techspec Gripster snakeskin	£46.76
Sprint air filter	£81.00
R&G Eazi-Grip	£40.00

enhances the ride; not an easy thing to measure given the 'false' airflow on a dyno. But given the boasts of consistent airflow, an optimised filter surface area that provides more airflow filtration and more promised power I should feel the effects. I'll let you know.

So now I'm waiting to take delivery of a new set of Metzeler Sportec M7 RR tyres to replace the damaged OE Supercorsas. It's a shame as these still had some life in them, but I've wanted to try this new addition to the Metzeler range for a while now. Given their 'Sporty Handling, Grip in all Conditions and Extended Mileage' claims, they should be well suited to the turns in the weather ahead and a few trips I have planned this Autumn - which will include taking in some of those winding roads in the North of England, up in the Lake District and the like. I have some serious mileage to catch up on. **EB**

### Thanks to:

Ian at Speedycom  
www.speedycom.co.uk, 0129 881 6633  
Simon at R&G Racing  
www.rg-racing.com, 01420 89007  
Steve at Reactive Parts  
www.reactiveparts.com, 0844 414 5412



Old above, new below...







All it took to make Charlie look fast was a ZX-10R!

## CHARLIE KAWASAKI NINJA ZX-10R ABS

TIME ON TEST:  
3 MONTHS (FBK305)

03158

ODOMETER  
MILES

BHP: N/A  
GAIN: N/A

NEXT AIM:  
PROTECTION

THIS MONTH I HAVE MOSTLY BEEN... "Analysing the shopping trip..."

Oh, I am very excited at the announcement that a new ZX-10R is on the way. The teaser campaign has already begun and the Big K is keeping details well under wraps. Even the most sickly sweet calls to the PR officer has got me nowhere, thus there's a resounding silence to the question, will it have a quickshifter?

It will have, surely, but I have to admit that I'm pretty pleased that the current model doesn't – otherwise I wouldn't have had the playtime with the HM GP that has thrown out some awesome info.

I did make a slight balls up in recording the data from the 'shifter, as it records every 'session' the bike is involved in. So having had a day on track, riding the bike home and adding a few more journeys before downloading the data meant I lost the info that the 'shifter is really designed to record and improve; hard, fast, track riding.

The memory on HM's GP will record at length, but has its limitations. Download straight after a Moto2 race and you would expect to get the data from warm up, qualifying and free practice session two and three. However, my seven sessions around Castle Combe were gone, leaving me with data on my runs back and forth to work, out to the shops and even to and from my mum's house.

However, even this less than aggressive riding highlighted some

interesting stuff. The shift force that I have been applying through the lever whilst pootling around town is typically around 26kg. This is extremely easy going and laid back riding, with shifts taking place between 7-8,000rpm. Putting this into context, a force of over 100kg is an average taken from racing data, with the heaviest shift recorded being in excess of 175kg! Granted, this is working with race gearing, thus pressing down, but it shows a huge gulf between the soft foot of a commute and the hard charge of a racing scenario.

Further to this, my results continually recorded 'Non-HMSS', meaning that no Seamless Shift's were recorded as the 'shifter had not re-introduced the power any earlier in my gear changes. My settings need to be evaluated as I'm not getting the most out of this technology, at least not from my on road data.

I'm not surprised. Data recorded for a pint of milk is not chasing lap times – but it does show a remarkable level of detail that this unit will record. And Seamless Shifts are not to be underestimated; even saving a few milli-seconds per shift can mount up to full second or more over the course of a race – and you can win a race by that little.

So what I obviously need to do is get back out on track and take a PC laptop with me. As yet the GP software is not available for Mac devices, which I find a



Price from new: £12,199  
Insurance group: 17

Modifications:  
HM GP Quickshifter £972.00

bit limiting. I'm hoping that this can be rectified. Then, hopefully, I can get another day like I did at Castle Combe this month. The ZX-10R is brilliant on track, and having got used to the bumps and undulations of Combe I was beginning to make real progress in my riding and lap times. It would be nice to add some shifting data, but before this happens I'd better fit the crash protection that has arrived from R&G.

I have also just returned from a visit to Reactive Parts where a couple of choice aftermarket additions have been put onto the big Ten. There will be more on the lovely Lightech levers and ruddy awesome rearsets next month.

### Thanks to:

Steve and Chris at Reactive Parts  
www.reactiveparts.com, 0844 414 5412  
Castle Combe for the track time  
www.castlecombecircuit.co.uk



Shifter storage



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Pipe (not) of peace!



## DANIEL DUCATI SCRAMBLER

TIME ON TEST:  
3 MONTHS

00734

ODOMETER  
MILES



BHP: N/A  
GAIN: N/A



NEXT AIM:  
EARPLUGS?

THIS MONTH I HAVE MOSTLY BEEN... "Braaaaaaap'ing!"

I don't quite know what it is about the Ducati, but it makes you feel special. It's not like driving a Ford Fiesta, it's like owning an Aston Martin – everybody knows what a Ducati is. I had been riding with a friend one Saturday and on the way home we stopped at our friendly neighbourhood Co-Operative. Bikes parked outside, we got some drinks and headed to the counter. The lady asked "Whose is the Ducati then?" "Mine..." I replied, thinking I was in trouble for parking outside the door! Much to our surprise she then goes on to tell us how Ducatis are her favourite bikes and how much she loves them. As we stood outside having a drink, a friendly bloke came over and wanted to talk about the Scrambler as well! I couldn't help but laugh as you wouldn't get that riding anything else. It comes with the brand and although it may seem like brand snobbery, it genuinely makes you feel special.

So, as if the bike didn't have enough attention already, I arrived home from work last week to a surprise parcel. Performance Parts Ltd (a huge thank you!) have collaborated with Fast Bikes and sent me an Akrapovic slip-on exhaust. At first, however, I thought they had sent me a box of polystyrene as the box was so light!

I went about fitting it the other weekend. I recorded it all, from taking

the stock exhaust off to fitting the Akra' and the video length is something like ten minutes, so that speaks for itself really. I'll get it uploaded to Fast Bikes' website, including the unboxing and sound checks, sometime soon.

The most noticeable difference is the weight. The old muffler weighs 1.6kg more than the Akra' and I could bloody tell taking the thing off. It was just a few bolts here and there and it slips off the standard header pipes; no faffing around with any fairings or putting it on race stands. I had assembled the Akra' off camera, which again was a two-minute job. I had no spring pullers so had to improvise to get the springs on but soon it was all sorted and bolted up.

I tried it with the baffles in first. – you've got to be sensible haven't you? The sound was a big improvement over standard; it's raspier and definitely gave the bike some more character. It doesn't improve it much in the volume department though. Two Allen key bolts and a bit of faffing later, the baffles were out – and the ASBO machine was born!

That same Sunday I took the bike down to Matlock, Derbyshire. If you're local you'll know that Sunday is biker central at Matlock, they line up along the entire strip and there's not a single place for a car to park. I rode through the main strip feeling like a criminal. Every man and his dog was looking at the Ducati,



Price from new:  
Insurance group: 9

£6,995

**DUCATI**  
INSURANCE

probably thinking 'what a job!'

The sound is simply incredible. Bear in mind I'm a 22-year-old with all my hearing, I probably wouldn't recommend it for more sensible (older) folk. It's a bit of a cross between a Spitfire and a Harley with no downpipes. Every time you even think about touching the throttle it cracks and bangs like a shotgun! On a bike like the Scrambler that weighs next to nothing, has outright cool styling and a booming exhaust, it makes for an absolute hoot of a combination. I would definitely recommend it if you're looking to add character to the bike, or just want to scare little old ladies. Unfortunately, I can't comment regarding power, as my Scrambler is A2 restricted – boo! 

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PIC: KAWASAKI

*I am the champion,  
I am the champion...*





## 20 YEARS IN THE MAKING

Two decades is a long time to wait for your most longed for desire to be fulfilled. That's how long Jonathan Rea wanted to be a world champion; the dream beginning when just a nipper. Now that dream has finally been realised. It's been an astonishing season for Rea, one we did and didn't expect. We always knew he'd be incredible on a truly competitive bike, and he hit the ground running on the Kawasaki ZX-10R.

When things go your way, you're unstoppable, and J-Rea made hay while his rivals floundered early on in the season, building up a commanding and unassailable lead in the points.

His team-mate, former WSB champion Tom Sykes, took an age to get used to the ZX-10R under the new WSB rules that severely curtailed the bike's former performance. Jonathan knew no different, however. This meant he could just get on with riding it while Tom hunted for what once was. So Tom's early season results weren't up to his usual standard and he wouldn't get near his former glory until midway through the season when he was happy on it, by which point it was far too late to stop Rea.

Aprilia mounted Leon Haslam began the year with a win at Phillip Island, but even then Aprilia knew it was in for a tough ride. Despite the proddy bike having the option of moving the engine in the frame, the team had to choose one position before the racing

began, and they did not choose wisely. While Aprilia could be there or thereabouts, Leon told FB after the second round that they were going to struggle all year due to this decision – and so they did.

Then there was Ducati with Chaz Davies, the Italian manufacturer still trying to find its way with the Panigale, working at some tracks early on, but then being decidedly difficult at others, or breaking down entirely. As time has shown, Ducati has now got it pretty much sorted out but, like Sykes, way too late to do anything about the charging Rea.

We always knew Jonathan was better than the Ten Kate Honda he'd been riding for years. When things went well he could win on it, but nobody else could since 2009 as one team-mate after another floundered on the second Fireblade. Rea getting his hands on something decent was always a big worry to his rivals, and the reasons for those concerns grew more evident with every passing round. Rea nearly amassed more race wins in one season than he had his entire WSB career thus far.

We are extremely pleased for the bloke, and it'd be hard to bet against him in 2016 – even with a new Yamaha to fight against, a tough team-mate and other rivals such as Chaz now winning race after race. But well done sir, well done indeed. It's been a long time coming Mr 2015 World Superbike Champion, massive congratulations!

Dreams can come true...





# WSB: All Change!

Just before going to print, one of the worst kept secrets in the WSB paddock was finally made public – Crescent is to be the official Yamaha WSB team in 2016! We alluded to as much last month, but with there likely to be two teams running the new R1, one official and one officially backed, we weren't quite sure who was going to do what. However, the announcement has been made that Sam Lowes will be joined by Sylvain Guintoli, thereby ending his Honda flavoured annus horribilis. Anyone who may wonder why Paul Denning is allowing Sylvain to join Crescent (after their very public falling out when Guinters joined Aprilia a couple of years back) only has to look at who their new sponsor is, Pata. Pata and Guintoli go together like salt and vinegar, and there's nothing like a huge pile of cash to mean bygones really are bygones in racing, after all. We love Guinters, but can't help but be a little disappointed there's no superstar signing on board alongside Lowes. That being said, Sylvain's ultra smooth style should suit the R1 and overall Denning finds himself with a very strong future team in WSB.

Where does that leave Suzuki, then? Well, word is that the new GSX-R won't be ready until midway through next year, which will prove problematic to any team wanting to take a punt. We'd love Alstare to come back, and seeing as they were able to race a Bimota that had little chance of ever reaching the required number of production units made, we can't imagine the WSB bosses would have a problem with someone running the bike early. It's not like they won't be building thousands of them, is it?

Aprilia, meanwhile, has already hinted at its plans for next year (see separate story), but BMW could be back with a bang. The Althea squad is in talks to field a well-supported team running the German machine. It's even skirting around Marco Melandri as one of the team's riders, and we all know he's capable of winning races on one, whether he's pouting or otherwise. Finally, MV Agusta is looking for a second rider to join Leon Camier, firstly on the F4 but then on its brand new bike that we'll see mid-season onwards. All in all, things are looking pretty dapper thus far for WSB.



*Competitive? Just a bit!*

*We hear the pitter  
Pata of rider changes...*



## RACING LINES

### Stapleford Steps Up

Luke Stapleford will be racing in BSB from Silverstone onwards, taking James Westmoreland's vacated seat with JG Speedfit Kawasaki. Fair play, he'll race both BSB and supersport where he hopes to clinch the title. Best yet, is that he's winning it on the old Triumph 675R, which nobody seems to have picked up on all year!

### Where to, Leon?

With Aprilia leaving WSB to a private team, and other seats filling up fast, where can Leon Haslam end up in 2016? We know he's not done with WSB just yet, so while a BSB return would be welcome, it's not expected. Maybe Ten Kate is an option, as his time there was marred by bad luck and injury – and if Johnny Rea can win on the Honda, Leon will believe he can, too. Fingers crossed for him...

### Zarco Staying Put

The whole point of Moto2 was that the champion moved the following year into MotoGP. However, that has fallen by the wayside since Dorna needed an Aussie in MotoGP to boost Phillip Island crowd numbers. With Marc VDS looking to upgrade its own Tito Rabat, there was nowhere decent for champ in waiting Johann Zarco to go, so he's elected to defend it in 2016. Good luck, Monsieur!

### Lowes to Aprilia

Sam Lowes has become an Aprilia test-rider, with an eye to race for the manufacturer in MotoGP in 2017. In the meantime he'll switch to the Gresini squad in Moto2, where he should have a much better chance of winning the title, or at the very least, winning lots of races. Not a bad job if you can get it, and Aprilia stay in business...

### Ditto, Jordi Torres

Torres has been a bright spark in WSB in 2015, with 'Spanish Elvis' taking the class to his heart and giving it a damn fine go of things. It could be that he gets retained in any private team running Aprilias, but that's no guarantee, although understandably he doesn't seem hugely keen to return to Moto2 either. Wherever he ends up, be assured he'll try his sideburns off!

### Kent to Moto2

As soon as Scott Redding took the Pramac Ducati offer, Danny Kent decided the best place was home, that being his current Leopard team. So, he'll compete in Moto2 next year regardless of winning the Moto3 title or not, and will be hoping for a much better showing than his previous outing in that class. And from there, presumably MotoGP – go Danny!



# WSB: Aprilia Go Private

Aprilia has admitted that next season it will not be running a factory WSB team. It has stated that the future is in MotoGP, but we must ask ourselves where have we heard that before? Oh yes, when Aprilia pulled out of WSB the last time in 2003, claiming MotoGP was its future. A couple of years later the company was bankrupt, and bought out by Piaggio.

Maybe this is what it wants, to spend its way out of business again so it can also get an automotive sugar-daddy to step in and pay the bills, much like Ducati (Audi) and, to a lesser extent, MV Agusta with AMG Mercedes. With MotoGP surely costing Aprilia a minimum of 30-million Euros a year, we don't believe it sells enough road bikes or scooters to cover that for more than a season or two. Hell, if it ploughed that cash back into the dealerships and so on, Aprilia could maybe eventually do it off its own back. It doesn't make much sense as Aprilia will never truly challenge Honda and Yamaha there. Even if the bike becomes amazing, without one of the very top boys riding it's just not going to happen. So, no factory WSB team, however, it has alluded to still running

factory bikes, but with a private outfit. And the rumour is the team most likely to fettle RSV4s is Shaun Muir's Milwaukee BSB effort. Now, that would be a turn up for the books alright seeing as the team were odds on to run Yamahas prior to the Crescent reveal. With Josh Brookes flying, and Nicky Hayden desperate for a good WSB seat, it could be a real blinder of a move by Muir if it comes off. Let's just hope that if it does, Aprilia's GP obsession doesn't somehow leave Muir in the lurch when the last of their Euros vanishes down the MotoGP drain...



## GOOD MONTH

### Shane Byrne

Back in the wins at Oulton Park, but...

### Jonathan Rea

World title number one wrapped up!

### Valentino Rossi

Lorenzo's crash gives the GOAT hope.

### Josh Brookes

First two Showdown wins banked.

### Carl Stevens

Best 899 result ever at Assen, bruv!

## BAD MONTH

### Shane Byrne

...blew it at Assen. No podium, no happy...

### Tommy Bridewell

Showdown shocker for Tommy. Bollocks...

### Jorge Lorenzo

Busy handing points to his team-mate.

### Jules Cluzel

Broken leg = title chances gone.

### James Westmoreland

Lost his BSB ride. There, there...


Josh is on fire!



## MOLE: TWO'S NOT A CROWD

# Pit Shadow

■ Is it just me, or is the one bike rule in many championships utterly ridiculous? It's starting to really piss me off, I can only imagine how teams and, more importantly, sponsors feel about it sometimes. Off the top of my head, the MotoGP support classes, BSB and WSB all have a single-bike rule. Now, that's all well and dandy most of the time, but when something untoward happens it often leaves teams and riders in the lurch. It's all well and good claiming it saves money, but that's utter bollocks. The truth is every team has a spare bike, the issue being it's in bits. We've all seen those teams trying to get bikes ready for a session or a race after a spill. But sometimes it's just not possible to build or rebuild a bike that fast, meaning the team has essentially wasted their time (and money) all weekend, as has the rider, and sponsors paying large sums of cash to enjoy the racing have nobody to watch bar the competition. Take John Hopkins at Cadwell Park during qualifying. He'd been going well all weekend, but had a crash in QP1 and that was that, far down the grid. There have been other instances where teams can't get a bike built for a second race of the day if it's in superbikes, or sometimes even for a first race if there been a huge off during morning warm-up. Kyle Ryde had a crash recently in British supersport, and although injured he was ready to go, but was told the bike was too damaged to race at all. So any chance he had of chasing down the title leader and keeping the series alive vanished in an instant. Yes, shit happens in racing, but this kind of thing can put a real dampener on everything and everyone involved. Put like that, it seems like utter madness to insist upon such a ruling as a single-bike only.

Teams have the second bike in bits already, so why not just scrap it and let them build it before the weekend? So if something goes amiss, be it a crash, a mechanical or whatever, the rider jumps on his spare bike and off he goes. The rider is happy, the team is happy as their work hasn't been for naught, the crowds are happy, and sponsors are happy to see the focus of their cash injection out there doing his or her thing. Now, I know this was also implemented to help close the gap between top teams and smaller concerns. But let's be honest, with the best will in the world (and I love the guys at the back of grids as without them every class on the planet would be sparse), everyone having one bike isn't going to change their fortunes one bit in the grand scheme of things. They may get one or two places higher up if others' bikes can't be sorted, but that's about it. I really do hope that series organisers have a long think about this rule, on the face of it the idea is sound, but the reality really isn't. 



WORDS: BENJAMIN J KUBAS CRONIN PICS: GRAEME RAVENSDALE, DOUBLE RED, MSVR



Hopper fires  
off into space...

# JOHN HOPKINS

John Hopkins' career has been nigh on the definition of a rollercoaster ride. And, once more, we find 'Hopper' fighting his way back up from a big drop...





*Bet this still hurts...*

**L**ast year, we expected former MotoGP ace John Hopkins to be harassing the front of the BSB pack all over again. After all, he'd done it before and only lost the title in 2011 in what's perhaps the greatest deciding final lap of any racing series anywhere, from any time.

So in 2014 Hopkins had returned from injury, and was coming back to Britain after a stint on the world stage. However, it wasn't a good year. Early promise quickly dropped off, and unless it was raining, both he and then team-mate Josh Waters struggled all year long on the TAS Suzuki. In fact, John seemed a shadow of his former ebullient self.

John's fall from MotoGP grace has been well documented, we ourselves published a concise and honest appraisal by John a couple of years ago on exactly where, when, why and how his career had spiralled out of control. It takes a lot to come back from the dark depths he was dredging, but he managed it and came out fighting. We're not interested in digging up old skeletons, though we want to know where last year went wrong, and how he got to where he is now, back in BSB. It all began following a year-long break in 2013. It must have been good to have some time off to centre yourself, and find your way?

"Yes it was," said Hopkins, "but I did have

to have a massive hip operation, too. It was a case of listening to the doctor's orders and repairing the hip. It had been getting worse and worse over the years, but finally getting it repaired and having some time out was good. The pain I had been dealing with when riding was really bad, when it was fixed I was able to feel good on a bike again."

But your return with the TAS Suzuki team didn't work out as planned, did it?

"No, it was a tough year all around. It was unfortunate going into last season as I had huge expectations, even though I'd had a year out and had been laid up for six months with not much movement at all. Plus my wife got





pregnant and we had our first child, so there was a lot going on. I can honestly say that going into it I could have been a little physically fitter, but it was still a matter of building up to it after all that time off. It was just a shame that our very first race at Brands Hatch was our best of the year; in the races and in qualifying. Looking back, 2014 was a bad year – but I can't say anything negative about the TAS team. They were always amazing and tried their hardest. It was a struggle, we just never clicked, never got into the groove or got any of the results any of us

were expecting. The Suzuki is an ageing bike compared to a lot of other stuff on the grid too, which didn't help, but it is what it is."

But the team's move to BMW from Suzuki this year justified your problems somewhat?

"Well, exactly. It's quite clear on paper what part of the problem was there, and why we struggled. That they've moved manufacturers despite their relationship with them shows how much of a struggle it was. It's a shame, though. I have had a really good relationship with Suzuki throughout my career, and still do, but when the competition are bringing out two or three new models of bikes since Suzuki's last all new machine, it's clearly difficult for them to compete in such a tough field."

Despite this, we heard rumours you were set for a return to the world stage?

"I was working on a WSB deal, especially with the lack of Americans in the series, and it seemed like a great option. It was a BMW ride I was working on, it was getting closer and the funds were coming into place. But then around December time I got wind that plans were starting to fall through, the cracks started to show and then it dragged on through January. It wasn't until the end of January that we got a clear cut answer that it wasn't going to happen. By that time I was so

frustrated with everything, especially after the season we just had. I always believed in my talent, but it was a matter of really taking stock and asking what I was really doing. Having made money racing bikes for many years, I'm now spending money to go racing and in 2014 I wasn't enjoying myself on a bike at all. So I had to decide whether or not to continue racing, or take a new path in my career. It was a good month in the end, I stopped all negotiations as I knew all the hot rides were full, so did some soul searching and got some good family time in."

Which, by the looks of things, worked for you quite nicely?

"Yeah, I sat back and watched everyone do their winter testing, then WSB started at Phillip Island, all of which made me really miss racing again. The more I thought about it, the way 2014 went there was no way I wanted it to end like this. Plus going on websites and Twitter, seeing people say how washed up and finished I was, well that put the fire back in my belly and made me realise that after my up and down career, no way was 2014 going to be the end of me, no way in hell. From that point I was more determined than ever to go and find something that could show what I was capable of."

Was there anything in particular that caught







*The best looking bike on the BSB grid, no doubt!*



*Hopper's pace on the Ducati has surprised many*

*At this point, things were looking peachy...*

your attention at the time?

"Lots of rides came up, in all the series, but throughout it all there was nothing that wasn't even mid-pack or taking a step back in classes, and I wasn't going to do that. I was fortunate to have made a bit of money, and save it back when we were able to make good money in racing, so I wasn't in a desperate need to go out and secure cash or a job. I'm lucky to have had the luxury of being able to wait, which is when the Moto Rapido Ducati offer came about."

Speaking of money, and out of curiosity, percentage-wise how much does a BSB wage compare to your time in GP?

"I don't know, I'm not sure what the current figures are these days. I can go off what I made last year, but previously the bike industry took a massive crash and motorcycles became a luxury, so if the manufacturers aren't selling bikes they struggle to pay riders. Everyone was hit, not counting those at the extreme peaks, of course, but everyone's salaries were severely decreased. It's picked up a bit, but going on my BSB salary last year, it's about five percent of what I made racing MotoGP for Suzuki. Then if you take into account the exchange rate of dollars to pounds, the UK cost of living, etc, I actually haven't made a salary

from racing since 2011 when I actually paid £100k to race with Crescent Suzuki. I put that money in to help get the project off the ground, but I'd made a bit of money back from the bonus program in my contract. So I did make a little bit of money that year, but then even with a half decent contract salary the following season, when you put in costs – motorhomes and so on – I only just broke even in 2012!"

Which is the way it seems these days for most racers. Speaking of WSB, surely you're not done there yet?

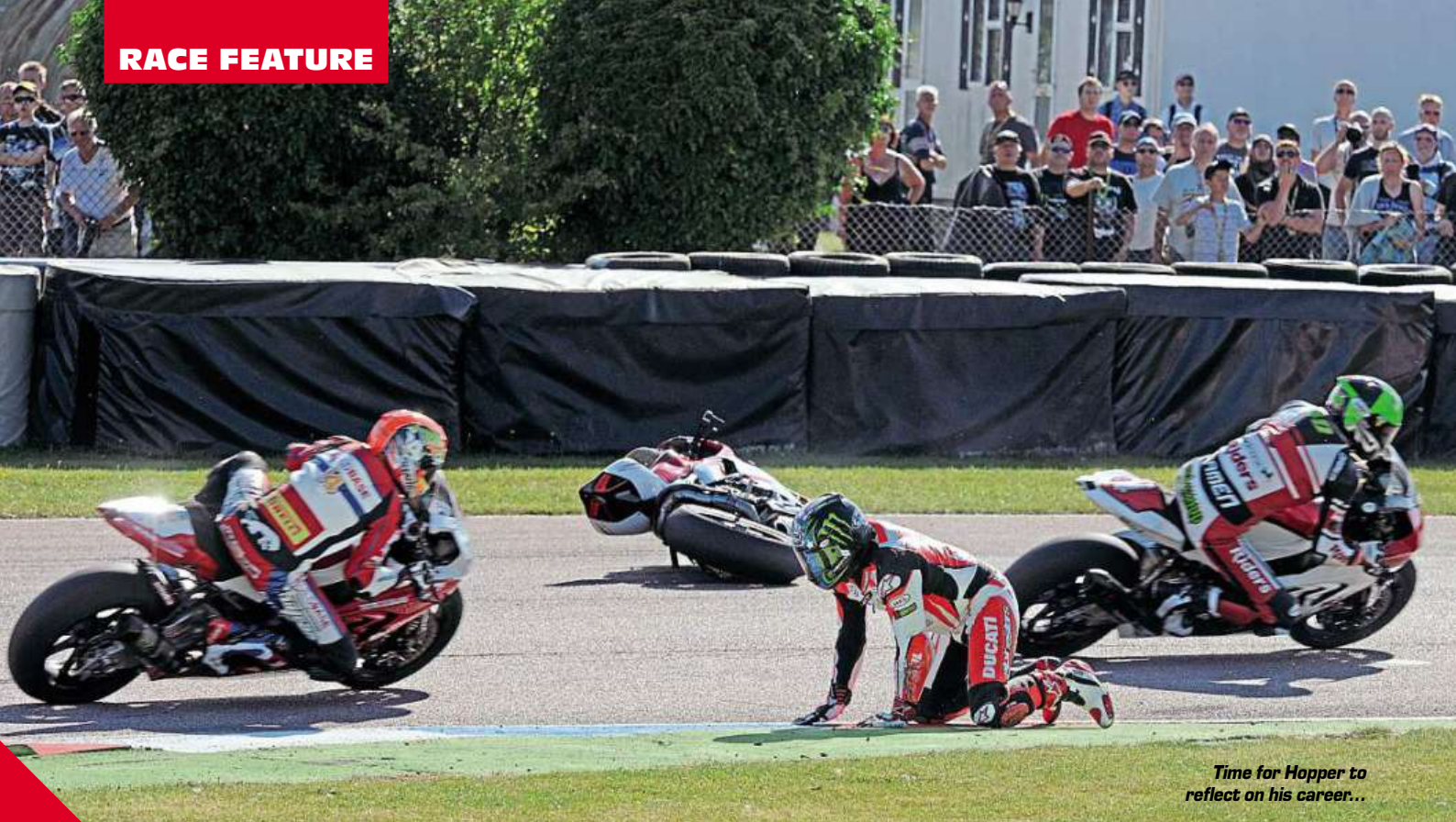
"Yeah, it's weird how it's worked out. Unfortunately, I do feel like I have an extreme amount of unfinished business in WSB. It's a really unlucky series for me. I'd say my only quality WSB race was that Silverstone wildcard ride in 2011. That was a real peak set of races for me over three weeks; we did the BSB round at Brands Hatch, then the WSB wildcard, then the MotoGP race at Brno where I unfortunately broke my finger and had it chopped off! But that was my only WSB race where I was fit and had a half competitive bike. Even then, we were on a BSB bike, so we weren't fully competitive, but it was still good. I haven't had a decent season there though, 2009 was horrible after half a year on the Stiggy Honda carrying a bunch of injuries.

Plus my head was all over the place back then so I shouldn't have even been on a bike at all. And then in 2012 I had that bad hip injury which was getting worse every race, and that's no way to do a season there. It was such a painful experience just riding a bike, and I tried to give a hundred percent but couldn't. On a good bike, and with me fit I'd love to give it another go, it's just whether or not the chance presents itself."

But you're back in BSB now, on Jakub Smrz's ex-bike, how did that come about?

"I was constantly speaking with BSB boss Stuart Higgs since the beginning of the year, and was present at the first few BSB rounds so everyone knew I was still around. Stuart was keen to find me a ride and get me back in BSB and offered as much help as he could, and always said he'd let me know if something good came up. I was back in California when I got a text from him about the Moto Rapido Ducati ride, asking if I was interested. Instantly I was. It's a good bike, a great package and I'd liked what I'd seen Jakub doing on it at the start of the year. His qualifying and lap times showed it had made a massive improvement, so I decided to jump on it as soon as I could. We arranged the Brands Hatch test prior to the race. I realised I hadn't even ridden a bike, bar a bit of 🏍️"





*Time for Hopper to reflect on his career...*

» motocross, for about seven months! I was also a bit worried as I had never ridden a Ducati in my entire life. But I couldn't believe how I gelled with it immediately, I've never felt so at home on a bike so quickly before."

And how does the Panigale compare to your 2014 Suzuki?

"Oh man, it's like night and day. It's far more competitive than the bike I was on last year, no question about it. The chassis is stiff and I like that, a real rigid motorcycle and it feels like a proper race bike, it doesn't float or wallow and you feel everything on the track, it's really good!"

Yet you seem to have adopted some of Jakub's bad luck?

"Yeah, we've had a bit of bad luck so far but we are coming up to some good tracks. Going into Brands it would have been fantasy to believe we could somehow make it into the shootout, we just wanted to get good points and solid results. I think the Ducati will suit some of the tracks coming up, we've proved already we've got the pace to be near the front, we just need the races to work out for us and we'll be there."

You had a huge off at Cadwell Park in qualifying, what happened?

"Unfortunately I took a tighter line, I always do it in qualifying to try and get the gas on earlier down the straight. It was a line I'd never taken before, and I hit a bump that was massive, one I'd never even realised was there. I was at full lean angle and lost the front. With the one bike rule we were out of the session and I also fractured a bone in my finger. Starting so far back at Cadwell is such a hindrance though, almost impossible to do well with such a strong grid. Having said that, I've never had a good weekend at Cadwell!"

We didn't quite see what happened later, but it appeared you may have been taken out by Howie Mainwaring going into the hairpin?

"Yeah I was, it was stupid. I'm not going to sugarcoat it, I think the guy is an idiot. What he did was crazy for, what, one point I think it was. I went into the corner at full lean angle, looking to bring it home and start thinking


about Oulton Park. The next thing I know he completely T-boned me. I don't think he even touched the brakes to be honest, he ripped my hands off the bars and my leg got wedged between our bikes. With no hands on the bars it sent me straight into the barrier and I went in head first, flipped up into it and over the fence. I was so lucky not to have any more injuries from it, I don't know what he was thinking, it was a really stupid move on his part but, whatever. There's racing moves and then there's just idiocy, and that was plain stupid. I'll try and stay well away from him from now on, hopefully in front!"

But we imagine 2016 is in your mind, either BSB or a good ride in WSB?

"Yeah, that definitely would be great. In fact after just a few rounds I've had some interesting offers for 2016 on the table. I haven't confirmed anything, but it looks strong that wherever I am I'll have a competitive bike, and maybe the next couple of rounds will help me in securing a top seat."

Or perhaps, a return to the USA in the revamped Moto America series?

"Maybe later on, but I still have unfinished business in BSB and WSB first. I do hope it takes off for them over there though, it's something I'd certainly consider a little further down the road. What Wayne (Rainey) and those guys are doing, having to start from scratch from where the series had dropped to, so far it seems like they're doing a great job and I wish them all the best for the future," the American concluded.

We've got a lot of time for Hopper, he's easy to get on with and has always been honest with us about both his good and bad points over the years. In fact, he used to be a columnist for us when he raced in MotoGP. The speed he has shown on the Ducati has been remarkable, although luck with breakdowns has been downright depressing. At some point, however, the bike will come good and John will be able to show a bit more of the raw pace he's been displaying in practice and qualifying sessions. We wish him and Moto Rapido the best of luck! 

## JOHN HOPKINS: CAREER

- ▷ 2002 – MotoGP / Yamaha – 15th
- ▷ 2003 – MotoGP / Suzuki – 17th
- ▷ 2004 – MotoGP / Suzuki – 16th
- ▷ 2005 – MotoGP / Suzuki – 14th
- ▷ 2006 – MotoGP / Suzuki – 10th
- ▷ 2007 – MotoGP / Suzuki – 4th
- ▷ 2008 – MotoGP / Kawasaki – 16th
- ▷ 2009 – WSB / Honda – 23rd
- ▷ 2010 – AMA / Suzuki – 10th
- ▷ 2011 – BSB / Suzuki – 2nd
- ▷ 2012 – WSB / Suzuki – 19th
- ▷ 2013 – NA
- ▷ 2014 – BSB / Suzuki – 10th



*Still rolling with the punches...*



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# Clive Padgett

**D**id any of you fine folks get to go to the Classic TT? What a wonderful event, and what a great time we had once again there. We managed to get some practice laps in; if you remember last month we barely got any time on track due to the weather. When Bruce finally got some complete laps in he was credited with a 126mph lap. We were stoked, but then we were told it was being taken away, and it was 123mph instead.

Best not to dwell on it, and we still had the races to come. Dan also was doing well on the OW-01 we took over for him. That bike doesn't even have a slipper-clutch, meaning that you must be far smoother racing it – and I

think, and hope, that may translate to Dan's riding on the modern kit as you have to think about what you're doing a bit more. And what a bike! I know I said this last month, but it doesn't look old at all.

On to the races, and things were going well. On the first lap Bruce was fifth by about halfway around, but once he'd bedded himself in he was in the lead by the end of that lap. He then managed a 126.2mph lap, which on a 23-year-old bike is amazing. And let's not forget this was on treaded tyres too, Dunlop D212 rubber that you could buy yourself. How fantastic is that? When he came in for his pit stop he had the bike stood on its nose at the stop box, he was really trying. But we noticed that the upper exhaust bracket had broken in four places. We wired it up to send him on his way. You must understand that it was already wired up beforehand, as this is a Grand Prix bike that's built for smooth circuits, not the public roads of the TT. Anyway, we doubled up the wiring this time, but as I'd kind of expected, it broke again (it was only lock-wire) and he was black-flagged.

I've read elsewhere that people said the exhaust fell off. Well, it didn't. The way it's mounted it can't, but there was a breakage in the bracket, but the marshals aren't to know it's not going to fall off, are they? Something breaking and something falling off are two completely different stories. So Bruce came in and started drinking his drink, thinking the race was over. But I'd run down to my friend Richard and begged him for anything we could use to sure it up, and got a coat hanger off him! Bruce had to throw his drinks bottle away pretty sharpish as we'd fixed it. He then went and closed down second place to the tune of 25 seconds – and took it by the end! I've never been so pleased to finish second, and I'm so glad we made the effort to keep going, too. What Bruce did was phenomenal, and he broke his own lap record by around 20 seconds in the process, which is stunning.

And then we were off to Scarborough not long after the Classic. Bruce was riding just his 600 while Dan was on a 600 and his superstock bike. I'm always amazed Bruce races with us there. If a corner is 100mph that's a hairpin to Bruce, and there are three hairpins on the mount! Anyway, it rained a bit, but Dan did really well. You know how much I love John McGuinness and how much I rate him, so for Dan to beat him was such an achievement, very commendable. And, for us this year, that's all folks!

Nope, we're not doing Macau this year. Sadly it just doesn't fit in with our plans. I can say, however, that we've already signed Bruce up for 2016. We did the deal while having a walk around Goodwood eating ice creams, just how I like it. As for the second seat, well it could be Dan as he's acquitted himself marvellously, he's always moving forwards, but I can only say watch this space...

Which leaves me to say thank you to all our team, and my family, and everyone who helped us make it such a good year again. Without every single one of them, no matter where they are or how much or little they do, we wouldn't be able to do it. We all make sacrifices too, it was our daughter's birthday while we were racing, so we had to celebrate when we got back. Sorry, sweetheart!



Bruce on his way to a 126.2mph lap on a 23-year-old bike. Stunning!



# Gary Johnson

I had a right good time at the Classic TT. A few problems on the bikes meant the results weren't the best, but that didn't stop me from having a good craic in the paddock. It's such a mega gig and I felt pretty spoilt to go straight from there to the Goodwood Revival.

It's a must-do event on my calendar, for which the plan had been to pair up with my pal Mick Grant on John Chapman's MV Agusta triple. Unfortunately, the short turnaround from one event to the next meant that the MV had to sit this one out, but that didn't stop me and my pensioner teammate from making it out on track.

We were kindly lent an original Lansdowne-spec Manx Norton, which was nearly as old as Mick. It ran a treat and after a decent day of practicing on the Friday, we decided to let our hair down – maybe a tad too much – at Lord March's welcoming party on the Friday night. There was champagne everywhere and smashed racers alike. How anyone made it around the circuit the next day is anyone's guess, but we all did and the opening 14-lap race went pretty well for Mick and I, crossing the line in fourth.

Less booze that following evening didn't dampen the night's celebrations. Everyone really gets into the swing at Goodwood, getting all dressed up and stuff. I got my swag on in an RAF officer's uniform. No matter what the others thought, I reckon I looked the kiddy and had a proper laugh with a load of great mates. The Revival's a rare event in that it hooks the top names of both the car and bike worlds, with displays of the most exotic of two and four-wheeled types. There's a good blend of new and old, but the theme of the place is retro. It's like stepping back in time. It's ace.

Helping the aged once more the following day, Granty and I put in another decent performance in the second race, once more finishing fourth. The combined results of the two races put us third overall and meant we had even more champagne to sup. Happy days!



This season's gone so fast, but there are still a couple of good events on the calendar. Later today I'm jetting off to Germany to go and test the Team Penz13.com BMW S 1000 RR at some random track called Frohburg. From what I hear, it's a pretty fast circuit, based on an old airfield, or something. It'll give me a good chance to have a run out on the Beemer before I race at the Macau GP later this season in the year's last race.

The team's well respected and I already know I'm making a great move in signing for those guys. That big race is still a few months off though, and before then I've got another classic endurance to prepare for Aragon, in Spain. I can't wait to get back out there on the Team Monex Suzuki GSX1100s with my mate Nick. No doubt it'll inspire a few tales for next month's column.



LEFT TO RIGHT: A quiet night was had by all. Gaz and Granty get ready for racing, while everyone else gets ready for drinking. Time for the race face...



# Two Siblings Racing

## Sun, sea and storms for Team FB at Anglesey

WORDS: DANGEROUS BRUCE  
PICS: ALEX JAMES PHOTOGRAPHY

**A**nglesey always provokes mixed emotions. It's a ball-ache to get there, but the reward is being able to ride one of the best tracks in the UK. With three different configurations to choose between, it was awesome to discover No Limits Racing had settled on the Coastal layout. It's the best of the trio, flowing from start to finish, factoring in some epic corners.

Having last been there eight years ago, doing the No Limits trackday the day before was a must – and Brod had never seen the

track before. But, as ever, he was quick to get on the pace and the learning experience was aided by some fantastic weather. As a Welshman once told me, 'we turn the sunshine off when you lot come over', but the switch must've been playing up because the temp was in the twenties. Life was sweet.

The tyres, however, weren't. Anglesey is mega abrasive and a lot of people were struggling to dial their set-ups to suit its surface. Even those who didn't know which end of a screwdriver to hold were having a

fettle at their suspension. We knew we had a good set-up, so worked instead on tyre pressures. We always work to hot figures, with the best results on our Metzeler RRs being achieved at 29psi.

Sod's law, that night it pissed it down and wets were the order of the morning. Brod was racing in the Newcomer 600s and had his qualifying immediately before the 45-minute endurance session. Having secured third place

*Experienced older brother...*



*...gets a lesson in style from younger bro!*



## RACING KNOWLEDGE: EXHAUSTS

Performance Parts Ltd is the UK importer for Akrapovic, Yoshimura and Remus. We asked Sales Director Andy Wilkes to give us some guidance on buying exhausts...

"Exhaust downpipe and collector designs have the most effect on horsepower characteristics, which is why race teams and anyone on a power quest will use a full system. Nowadays, most owners changing the exhaust just fit a slip-on silencer and do so for an improvement in noise, a better look and less weight. A common misconception in the industry is that if you fit an aftermarket exhaust the bike will need re-fuelling. It simply isn't true – providing you fit one that has been well developed in the first place. Power characteristics can sometimes be improved by

re-fuelling, but it is optional. Most aftermarket exhausts these days are manufactured using stainless steel, carbon fibre or titanium and all these materials are fairly durable, but one area that many owners neglect is the silencer packing material, which degrades over time. It's important to repack your silencer periodically to assure continued optimum performance and avoid burning issues. The old adage of 'you get what you pay for' applies here, as a premium product will not only develop good power with no flat



*Pipe dreams!*

spots, save weight and improve ground clearance, but the use of superior materials and construction techniques will ensure a high standard of fit and finish and the resulting increased longevity makes it great value in the long term." So there you have it!

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*Someone is about to get wet...*

on his solo grid, he then went out first in the endurance session and stuck the R6 third fastest! As the track began to dry, monkeys like me were sent out on dry tyres to try and up the pace. It was sketchy, the highlight being a fourth gear two wheel drift onto the back straight. That woke me up. With a lap to go, I slotted the R6 in 11th, second of the 600s in the field. Happy days.


Come the start of the race the weather was mint and the track was dry. I went first and found myself up at the pointy end on the first dozen laps. Riding a 600 is great, but you just get stuck behind the litre bikes. The first half of my race was full of desperate passes and I nearly rammied a few rear ends mid-corner, only to be utterly blitzed on the straights. Eventually I got lapping people and chasing lap times came second to negotiating my way through the pack safely.

Comfortably leading the 600 class, I handed the bike over to Brod an hour into the race. We had over a minute's advantage, but after refuelling and being caught the wrong side of a safety car, we actually dropped back to second for a few laps. This meant he had to pull his finger out and get a wriggle on.

On the horizon we could see the weather was minging and it suddenly hit us that we had no wets on rims. With Brod out clocking up the laps, my mate Ben Wotton and I

sprinted over to Tony at Parkitt Racing, who kindly and speedily got us the right kind of rubber fitted in time for me to take the reins for the second stint.

Fifteen minutes into the final hour my visor started fogging really badly and then the rain started to fall. The RRs are mega in greasy conditions, so I was still able to achieve kneedown despite the track's slippery surface. A lot of riders decided to pit and switch bikes with their teammates who had wets fitted. Being a one bike team, we didn't have that luxury, so just kept plodding on. That last hour was hard work. The plan had been to pit mid-way and switch once more, but because we didn't know whether I'd need to come in for a switch to wets I was kept out longer.

Having ridden for two hours during the race, clocking up 138 laps, seeing the chequered flag being waved was a welcome sight. My muscles ached and the gear selector had worn the skin off my big toe. I was knackered. I also felt pretty bad that Brod had only been out once during the race. He didn't mind too much. That next day he had three more races in the Newcomer 600 class to compete in and wasted no time in qualifying second that following morning. A fifth, a third and a second rounded off his weekend nicely. Four podiums in one meeting is just plain greedy, but that's how we roll! 



*Damp days...*



*Liam has taken to racing like a duck to water. Which has been apt on occasions...*

## ON THE GRID

Each month we shine the spotlight on a racer who's caught our attention.

**Meet Liam Marchant...**

The 32-year-old Lincolnshire plumber had a successful meeting, competing in both the No Limits Cup and the No Limits Endurance Open 1000 class on his Phil Drury Engineering/DK Motorcycles ZX-10R. "I'm a big fan of the Anglesey circuit. It's a real flowing course and reminds me a lot of Cadwell Park."

Having made a wrong tyre choice in qualifying for the cup races, Liam then managed to pull out some top results, crossing the line in sixth, fifth and first places. "I was pretty happy. The cup races are where I get the chance to ride as hard as I can, whereas the endurance is more of a thinking man's game. You have to be quick, but you have to be more considered, too. The dodgy weather made it hard work for everyone, but our team did a great job and we ended up crossing the line in third and simultaneously secured third place in the championship, which was awesome."



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Get her in boyo!

# Chaz Davies

**H**ello everyone, are we all having a good month? I've been busy finishing off our long summer break. Busy doing nothing, trying to find lots of things not to do, as the song says. Okay, not strictly true, I have of course been training a great deal to keep myself sharp down here in the valleys. That includes getting in some motocross, hanging out with some rugby boys (who the girls of the family got all excited about, funny enough), and generally trying to enjoy life.

I even managed to have some fun with the Fast Bikes boys playing on some bikes around the surrounding lanes, hills and then blatting about the go-kart track for larks. They've not got a bad job at all those FB lads, though they work hard, they keep telling me. Speaking of jobs, I can finally say that mine is now sorted for next year, the best news of all being that for the second off-season in a row I won't have to change bikes! Yep, as you may already know I'm signed up for next year alongside my current team-mate Davide, although it'll still be a while before sick-note is back on a bike. He's doing quite well with his recuperation from injuring his back, and I expect him to be on it and flying before next year begins.

I'm looking forward to having another year on the Panigale though, it's now starting to really feel like 'my' bike. Not that I'll have many excuses next season mind you, short of the competition taking a giant leap. Kawasaki have an updated bike coming, Yamaha will have the official team with Crescent and Suzuki apparently will also join in with another new bike. But our bike will be another year down the line in terms of development, and though it's been a long road it will be time to deliver.



Chaz is getting good at this winning thing - more, more!

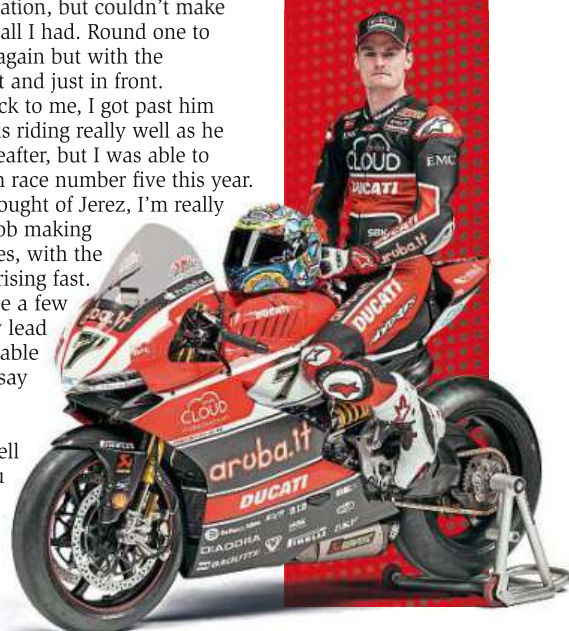
Which is what we've been doing mostly in the second half of the season, even at places where on paper we didn't expect to be up the front, like at Sepang. Bit by bit we're making tweaks and changes and she's getting better and better, I'm almost looking forward to another winter of testing to give her a final polish.

Yet, our long break finally came to an end when we rolled up to Jerez. Johnny Rea only needed a few points to take the world title, I'm still battling with Tom Sykes for second place, but really I just want to win as many races as possible from those left. Regarding Jerez, it's never been a favourite of mine. For whatever reason I struggle to click with the place, although admittedly during the last pre-season tests things were slightly better.

It wouldn't be a WSB round without me being arse in qualifying though, whether through fate, other issues or just me being plain rubbish. Sixth place on the grid isn't ideal, but to be honest the second row is always fine with me. If I went looking for single fast laps I could probably manage it, but how the bike fares over race-distance is far more important to me.

In race one I fluffed the start a wee bit and got caught up while Tom Sykes bolted. When I eventually got into second spot I got close and could hold station, but couldn't make up any ground and was giving it all I had. Round one to Tom. In race two he zoomed off again but with the temperature up I kept him honest and just in front. Eventually he started to come back to me, I got past him and pulled a gap. Jordi Torres was riding really well as he appeared on my board soon thereafter, but I was able to manage the gap and go on to win race number five this year. Considering what I previously thought of Jerez, I'm really stoked and the boys did a great job making minute adjustments between races, with the knowledge the temperature was rising fast.

Better yet, Sykes finished quite a few places back so I've extended my lead but with 100-points still on the table I won't celebrate just yet. I will say well done to Johnny though, a deserved champion for his early season pace and lots of wins, well done, but I'll be gunning for you next year! Anyway, Wales are about to smash England (They did too, just - Ed) in the rugby and we're about to watch it, so ciao till next month!





# Steve Parrish



**T**he last time we spoke I was in the middle of the Classic TT practice week. What a great event, it gets bigger every year. It's just like the TT, but with bikes that sound and smell much, much better!

Me, Steve Plater and James Whitham got to ride some of the old rotary Norton race bikes, although mine was the only one who's throttle couldn't be shut. I was warned about it beforehand, as they couldn't get it to close properly so I was the only person who went through Governor's Dip nearly flat out – with the clutch in, obviously! In fairness, it was amazing having them all there from the National Motorcycle Museum. I think 13 bikes went out and all but one returned. Sadly the one that broke down was William Dunlop's bike he was due to race... Mine ran, and it got around, but wasn't a huge amount of fun due to the throttle. They had a fantastic display there though, loads of British bikes, with Nortons from as far back as 1906. What a sight it was.

As for the racing, wasn't Bruce Anstey's YZR500 lap incredible, even with an exhaust hanging off? He'd have walked the race without those issues, but Michael Dunlop rode really well to bags the win. There was about half the people there as they get over for the TT, so it was busy but not too packed. Just right, I'd say.

Then it was on to the Goodwood Revival and a bit of cricket. I even bowled someone out, overarm too! I managed seven runs myself, but then couldn't walk for four days afterwards. So I've retired, meaning my cricket career started and finished on the same day.

I was racing one of Fred Walmsley's Manx Nortons with Doctor Keith Bush as my partner, which went well enough. It was a good race up the front, although Steve Plater broke his wrist after Mike Edwards fell off in front of him. It's getting rather serious there, bike owners are supposed to invite a VIP to join them, but now we have Whitham and Plater riding together, and some 'teams' that are both racers. I'm going to speak to Lord March to implement some kind of handicap system to give us a better chance. Me and the Doc had a combined age of about 130 so it's no wonder we weren't at the pointy end!

On to proper racing, and how about Silverstone and Misano MotoGP? Old Rossi is a jammy sod! I love the guy, but he needs a bit of luck these days – and is getting it. There's no way he'd have won Silverstone in the dry. But this is racing and you must ride in all conditions, which he's the master of. And then Lorenzo crashed at Misano in another weather affected race. I was gutted Marquez blew

it at Silverstone. Had he not he'd be in the hunt for sure. And what great stuff for Bradley Smith and Scott Redding, both of whom also had a bit of luck in Italy. Credit where credit's due – you must ride the conditions and they both reaped the rewards when stood on the podium.

Then there's Jonny Rea, our new WSB world champion, finally realising his dream of 20 years. Personally, I still think it's a shame he never went to MotoGP apart from those two rides deputising for Casey Stoner. When the time was right there were no bikes. I expect he's missed that window now and will stay in WSB, as he's not young enough to appeal to the top teams. Even the Lowes twins are getting on a bit in MotoGP terms, Rossi excepted of course. It's a young man's game these days...

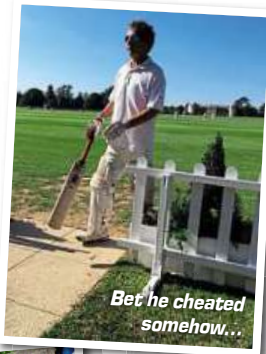
And Chaz Davies is doing great, mucho credit to him and his team for turning the Panigale into a winner. I like the way he gets better and better as a race goes on. It's interesting times for WSB. I hear Shaun Muir may take on the official Aprilia gig, and that Sylvain Guintoli may go to Crescent when they switch to Yamaha. But the series needs a boost, and could that be Rossi? I have no idea if he's going to want to battle again in 2016 if he wins MotoGP this year. He could be the saviour of WSB, it'd be massive again overnight, and you've got to think he'd win a title or two there. Valentino Rossi – MotoGP Legend and the man who saved WSB. Got a nice ring to it, eh?

Lastly, I've been up to no good again. We've been having some complaints about Plummet Airways taking off from our house by some neighbours. So, I may or may not have introduced some small burrowing friends of mine into said complainer's front lawn, which has since developed a mound or five! Funny, that.

Until next month...



The Fonz's brother...



But he cheated somehow...



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